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The Regeneration of Hamlet

A Reply to E. M. W. Tillyard with a Counter-proposal

S. F. JOHNSON

DURING the past twenty years there has been a marked reaction against the work of E. E. Stoll, the most considerable critic of Shakespeare since Bradley. Stoll undertook two major tasks in an attempt to refute and correct the essentially impressionistic criticism of the Romantic poets and the well-read Victorian belle-lettrists; he undertook to re-establish the integrity of the work of art, rightly insisting that the final test of criticism be the re-experience of the work as a whole, and to define the primary meanings of the plays in terms of the time and place of their composition and production. These two purposes have sometimes become contradictory in his hands, but he has usually been too astute to let this happen. More seriously, his almost single-handed efforts have sometimes led him to oversimplify the plays by assigning complex effects to external causes in Elizabethan theatrical conditions, thus implicitly denying that with single strokes Shakespeare could have been doing more than one thing at a time. In such cases, his criticism has tended to rob the plays of their richness, but his sins have for the most part been venial and should not blind us to the great positive value of his achievement.

Stoll's younger contemporaries have reacted variously against his tendency to oversimplify. But the reaffirmation of Shakespearian complexity, correct in itself, has furnished too many critics with opportunities for riding their own hobbies, ideological or other, or for simple reversion to the sins of nineteenth-century criticism, the substitution of the character for the play or the refusal to abide by the evidence in the play, with a consequent willingness to read into it the critic's own preconceptions. Thus we have been presented with Shakespeare as Thomist, Freudian, Marxist, existentialist, voluntaristic optimist, agnostic pessimist, and any of a number of varieties of mystic, singly or in combination. Is it any wonder that "shock-trooper PROFESSOR E. E. STOLL,"¹ as he has recently been called, cannot "put behind [him] the temptation to retort"² as he could twenty years ago?

The reaffirmation of Shakespearian complexity has, of course, produced some excellent criticism that goes beyond Stoll. This is particularly true of the historical criticism that focuses on the material of the plays, semantic, ideational, and theatrical, and of the analytic criticism that focuses on the form of the

¹ Anon., "A. C. Bradley," *T.L.S.*, March 30, 1951, p. 197.

² Elmer Edgar Stoll, *Shakespeare Studies* (New York, 1927), p. 490, n. 139; see reviews in *SQ*, I (1950), 36-43, and *M.F.*, XLVIII (1950), 122-132.

plays, metaphoric, generic, and mythic; witness the recent criticisms of *Lear* by Empson and Campbell and of *Hamlet* by Levin and Fergusson.³ Unfortunately, however, the critics who have progressed beyond Stoll are a minority; the majority, and among them some of the most influential, have regressed. I single out Dr. Tillyard, not because he is the worst of these,⁴ but because he is one of the most influential and has recently published views on *Hamlet* which may go far toward undoing the positively valuable work of such men as Stoll, Kittredge, and Hardin Craig, and confirming some of the worst of the nineteenth-century attitudes toward the play. In an attempt to counteract this effect, I shall first demonstrate in a single instance the weaknesses of Tillyard's method and then turn to his general criticism of the play, comparing his views with those of other critics and with the evidence in the play itself.

I

Dr. Tillyard holds that *Hamlet*, "though containing tragedy of sorts," is chiefly a "problem play."⁵ He uses the term advisedly, defining it to suit his purpose by the following statements: "two interests—in speculative thought and in the working of the human mind—[are] pursued largely for their own sake"; "here it is the problems themselves, their richness, their interest, and their diversity, and not their solution or significant arrangement that come first" (pp. 6, 31). He denies that the play answers to "one of our expectations from the highest tragedy" (p. 26) and that it possesses a clearly significant arrangement or solution of the "problems" it presents, though he calls it "the greatest display of sheer imaginative vitality in literary form that a man has so far achieved" (p. 27).

We are told that "the tragic mode is ideally very definite and formal. Motives are clear in the characters, and the spectator has no doubt where his sympathies should lie. . . . Further, in ideal tragedy life is presented in a startlingly clear and unmistakable shape: we are meant to see it indubitably so and not otherwise" (pp. 30-31). The appeal to clear and distinct conceptions, especially to preconceptions, has been doubly suspect since Descartes; it seems peculiarly out of place in Tillyard's pages, for this critic indulges in willful obscurantism when he refuses to accept one of the clearest of Hamlet's motives, that given him by Shakespeare for sparing Claudius at prayer. "Recent opinion," he writes, "has been over-suspicious of the psychological interpreters, who detect the presence of unacknowledged motives. . . . The world of *Hamlet* is one in which unexpressed motives are likely to count." Stoll responds to the assertion of this likelihood with the disarming question, "how can they, however?"⁶ Tillyard concludes, "the tenor and tone of Hamlet's speech shows him glad to have an excuse not to kill [Claudius]."⁷

³ William Empson, "Fool in *Lear*," *S. R.*, LVII (1949), 177-214, reprinted in his book, *The Structure of Complex Words* (Norfolk, Conn., 1951); O. J. Campbell, "The Salvation of *Lear*," *ELH*, XV (1948), 93-109; Harry Levin, "An Explication of the Player's Speech," *K. R.*, XII (1950), 273-296; Francis Fergusson, *The Idea of a Theater* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1949), Ch. IV.

⁴ On the contrary, he has written one of the better recent works on Shakespeare, *Shakespeare's History Plays* (New York, 1946), but his work on this dramatist seems to be suffering increasingly from the faults of his work on Milton.

⁵ E. M. W. Tillyard, *Shakespeare's Problem Plays* (London, 1950), p. 31.

⁶ Rev. of R. Flatter, *Hamlet's Father*, *SQ*, I (1950), 37, n. 2.

⁷ Pp. 146-147; from Appendix B, "Why did Hamlet spare Claudius at his prayers?" Like

The opinions of only two other critics are cited, both supporting his view: Peter Alexander, 1939, and William Richardson, 1784. Tillyard ignores the arguments of "the 'tough' interpreters" (p. 146), among whom he undoubtedly includes Kittredge and Stoll, although the latter in particular has argued convincingly for accepting Hamlet's stated motive at face value.⁸ He relies on his perception of the "tenor and tone" of the speech, but he makes no attempt to account for the important relations between this speech and the Ghost's speech about the pains of purgation and the manner of his murder (I.v.9-80), "No reck'ning made, but sent to my account/With all my imperfections on my head" (78-79). "O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!" follows immediately;⁹ it is almost an editorial comment and is of the highest importance in determining the tone of Hamlet's later speech, but it is not mentioned by Tillyard. Despite the fact, then, that his method seems to imply consideration of the work of other critics, close analysis of the text, and a sensitive ear for tone, this example of his practice demonstrates his refusal to consider some of the most influential and weighty criticism of the play, a lack of consistency in the analysis of the text, and a very uncertain sense of tone. In his discussions of the larger questions of the tragic quality and significant arrangement of the play, we must look for these three weaknesses, especially when we may be tempted by the apparent plausibility of some of the argument.

II

The tragic quality of *Hamlet* might be defended historically by recourse to the popular Elizabethan equation of "tragedy" with death.¹⁰ By this crude standard, however, critical ideas of tragedy from the time of Aristotle are twice confounded; no distinction remains between good and bad tragedy, or even between tragedy and much melodrama. Tillyard is working with more orthodox conceptions, and the critical practice of our time, if not of Elizabeth's, demands that his thesis be examined within the framework of those conceptions.

Tillyard distinguishes three kinds of tragic feeling, any or all of which

many other critics, Tillyard agrees with Claudius that the true son of a murdered father would cut the murderer's throat in a church: "No place indeed should murder sanctuarize;/Revenge should have no bounds" (IV. vii. 128-129; all citations of Shakespeare, unless otherwise noted, are to the *Complete Works*, ed. George Lyman Kittredge, Boston, 1936). Dover Wilson also agrees with Claudius in this respect. In *What Happens in HAMLET* (New York, 1935), p. 263, he writes, "all that [Laertes] says and does is a reflection upon Hamlet"; thus when Laertes tells Claudius that he would cut Hamlet's throat "i' th' church," "we are at once reminded of the King upon his knees and Hamlet putting up his sword." Paradoxically enough, Wilson prefers the morality of Claudius and Laertes to that of Hamlet, yet earlier in his book, p. 35, n. 1, he approvingly cites Dr. Johnson's *Preface* for the description of Claudius as "an usurper and a murderer, not only odious, but despicable" [Wilson's italics]. It should be obvious, as Dr. Johnson saw, that Claudius' attitude is antithetic to the moral assumptions of the play; he expresses this attitude to work on the unreasonable impulses of Laertes, who stoops to a villainous plot immediately afterward.

⁸ Most fully in *Hamlet* (Minneapolis, 1919), pp. 51-54.

⁹ This line (I.v.80) is assigned by most modern editors, including Kittredge, to Hamlet, although it is given to the Ghost in all the Folios and Quartos with the exception of the poor First Quarto, which gives the Ghost "O horrible, most horrible!" followed by Hamlet's "O God!" Arthur Colby Sprague, in *Shakespeare and the Audience* (Cambridge, Mass., 1935), p. 296, calls the seven lines culminating in this one "the crowning horror of the Ghost's narration."

¹⁰ For the extreme argument from this equation see J. V. Cunningham, "Tragedy in Shakespeare," *ELH*, XVII (1950), 36-46.

may be present in a tragedy: that produced by the suffering of a hero, with or without "tragic flaw";¹¹ that produced by sacrificial purgation, involving something of a religious response; and that produced by "renewal consequent on destruction." The third type concerns us here. Tillyard writes:

It occurs when there is an enlightenment and through this the assurance of a new state of being. . . . The usual dramatic means of fulfilling this tragic function is through a change in the mind of the hero. His normal world has been upset, but some enlightenment has dawned, and through it, however faintly, a new order of things. . . . Those tragedies which we feel most centrally tragic contain, with other tragic conceptions, this third one. It is partly through failing to contain this conception that *Hamlet* is separated from the three great tragedies with which it is popularly joined.

The main point at issue is whether Hamlet's mind undergoes during the course of the play a revolution comparable to that which takes place in the minds of Oedipus, or Lear, or Samson. If it does not, there can be no question of tragedy in the third sense. Till recently this point was hardly at issue, and my last paragraph would not have contradicted the general assumption. But recently a fundamental change in Hamlet's mind has been very confidently asserted (pp. 14-15).

At this point he cites J. Middleton Murry and C. S. Lewis, both of whom, in his view, find a fundamental change in Hamlet from terror of death, in the fourth soliloquy (III.i.56-88), to bravery in the face of death, in the speech in defiance of augury (V.ii.230-235).¹² Both, he claims, base their cases on the latter passage, but as he reads it "the passage shows no fundamental change in Hamlet's mind; and for two main reasons": (1) there is no spiritual development, since Hamlet has been shown to be deeply religious throughout the play; (2) "quietism not religious enlightenment is the dominant note [of the speech]. Hamlet is ready for anything that will come along; he has not acquired a new and liberating mastery of his own fate" (p. 17). But the question is not whether Hamlet experiences a religious conversion or whether he comes to think of himself as master of his fate, an attitude generally reserved by Shakespeare for his villains.¹³ Rather the question is whether Hamlet is made

¹¹ Hamlet, he says, lacks this "complication and . . . enrichment." He continues with the following astonishing statements: "Even with Desdemona and her loss of the handkerchief we think faintly that perhaps she was the kind of person who might have been so careless. No one could accuse Hamlet of being the kind of person whose mother was bound to enter into a hasty and incestuous re-marriage, of being such a prig that his mother *must* give him a shock at any cost" (p. 13, Tillyard's italics). Surely there is no need to refute such critical irrelevancies.

¹² The latter is quoted below, at the beginning of section III. Two points must be made here: (1) Although Lewis asserts that at the precise moment of this speech Hamlet, who had lost his way, finds it again ("Hamlet: The Prince or the Poem?" *Proceedings of the British Academy*, Annual Shakespeare Lecture [London, 1942], p. 13), he presents no theory of the development of this change; in another connection he remarks, following G. Wilson Knight, that Hamlet's hesitation is due to his fear not of death as such but of being dead. (2) Terror of death is beside the point, since Hamlet is always *ready* to die: "O that this too too solid flesh would melt" (II.ii.129); "I do not set my life at a pin's fee" (I.iv.65); "Into my grave?" and "except my life, except my life, except my life" (II.ii.210, 220-221); "'Tis a consummation/Devoutly to be wish'd" (III.i.63-64). His only qualification is that he must not die by his own hand, because "the Everlasting" has "fix'd/His canon 'gainst self-slaughter" (II.ii.131-132, cf. Brutus in *Caesar*, V.i.102-107, and Imogen in *Cym.*, III.iv.78-80) and because of "the dread of something after death" (III.i.78).

¹³ See note 42 below.

to experience a change of attitude toward his world similar in kind to the changes we find in the heroes of the other major tragedies.

Many critics besides Murry and Lewis, and Theodore Spencer, whom Tillyard also mentions, find a fundamental change in Hamlet after his return from the abortive voyage to England. In fact, there are very few critics who do not find a change; notable among this minority are Granville-Barker, who writes that Hamlet "never [in the course of the play] regains a natural spiritual health, nor [reaches] self-understanding,"¹⁴ and G. Wilson Knight, who agrees with Tillyard that *Hamlet* "is not tragic in the usual Shakespearian sense; there is no surge and swell of passion pressing onward through the play to leave us, as in *Lear*, with the mighty crash and backwash of a tragic peace. There is not this direct rhythm in Hamlet—there is no straight course. Instead of being dynamic, the force of Hamlet is, paradoxically, static."¹⁵

Oddly enough, Stoll contradicts himself on this point; in the same volume he writes that "the man himself is not changed, and only circumstances (along with the requirements of the drama) have thwarted him," and asserts that we are led to feel tragic peace, specifically in *Oedipus Rex*, *Lear*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, and even *Macbeth*, because of the heroes' "recognition of their errors or the regeneration of their natures. They are wiser if not finer for their sufferings. . . ." ¹⁶ Even Bradley recognizes some change: "In what spirit does he return? Unquestionably, I think, we can observe a certain change, though it is not great."¹⁷

Most critics, however, perceive a more fundamental change. Dover Wilson tells us that "Hamlet returns from his voyage a changed man, with an air of self-possession greater than at any other time of the play."¹⁸ Theodore Spencer finds that the Hamlet of Act V "is no longer in the tumult, but above it. . . ." ¹⁹ Roy Walker writes, "that Hamlet undergoes a sea-change between his departure in Act Four and his return at the beginning of Act Five is fairly generally agreed. . . ." ²⁰ Francis Fergusson argues that "until the success of his play, Hamlet feels his over-quick sympathy as a weakness, and covers it up with murderous sarcasm. On his return from England, he has accepted it, and in Act V his abnormally quick sympathy has acquired some of the quiet of the vision integrated and lived-up-to, some of the breadth of charity."²¹ Numerous other critics, whose interpretations of the meaning of the change are cited below, agree on this point, but there is much disagreement about the nature of the change and, therefore, about the question of its similarity to the changes in Shakespeare's other tragic heroes.

¹⁴ *Prefaces to Shakespeare* (Princeton University Press, 1946), I, 253. Tillyard misreads Granville-Barker, finding somehow that he agrees with Murry and Lewis (*Shakespeare's Problem Plays*, p. 32).

¹⁵ *The Wheel of Fire* (London, 1930), p. 45.

¹⁶ *Shakespeare and Other Masters* (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), pp. 177-178, 80; see also p. 157.

¹⁷ *Shakespearean Tragedy*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1949), p. 143.

¹⁸ *What Happens in Hamlet*, pp. 266-267.

¹⁹ *Shakespeare and the Nature of Man* (New York, 1945), p. 108, Spencer's italics.

²⁰ *The Time is out of Joint: A Study of Hamlet* (London, 1948), p. 143.

²¹ *Idea of a Theater*, p. 130.

III

Tillyard bases his argument on the speech that seems, by general consent, to have replaced Hamlet's sixth soliloquy (III.iii.73-96) as the crux of the play; it is Hamlet's response to Horatio's suggestion that he avoid the fencing match with Laertes:

Not a whit, we defy augury; there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be. (V.ii.230-235)

Tillyard's ear for tone leads him to conclude that the passage does not bear serious implications; it means just what it says. He argues "from the run of the prose" that the implication of a change in Hamlet is "fortuitous and not intentional."²² "The lightness of the final 'let be' is a true pointer to the spirit of the passage."²³ But his ear has again betrayed him. "Let be" is omitted from the Folios, though of course this tells us nothing about its intended tone. Far better for this purpose are such similar uses of casual remarks to set off serious speeches as the following:

Had I but time (as this fell sergeant, Death,
Is strict in his arrest) O, I could tell you—
But let it be. (*Ham.*, V.ii.347-349)

Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
Ripeness is all. Come on. (*Lear*, V.iii.9-11)

But why should honour outlive honesty?
Let it go all. (*Oth.*, V.ii.245-246)

The "lightness" of the final phrases specifically points, in each case, to the serious implications of the speeches. Tillyard's conclusion is: "At most Hamlet regains some of the dignity and composure that we know to have been part of his original endowment. Out of the wreck of his affection and respect for his mother something may have been salvaged. By comparing what has been regained or salvaged with what formerly existed whole we do indeed get a *pleasant sense of order*. But, with no great revelation or reversal of direction or *regeneration*, the play cannot answer to one of our expectations from the highest tragedy" (p. 26, my italics).

This view is not far from that of Bradley, whom Tillyard cites in his support:

I incline to think that Shakespeare means to show in the Hamlet of the Fifth Act a slight thinning of the dark cloud of melancholy. . . . But I find it impossible to believe, with some critics, that . . . any material change in his general condition, or the formation of any effective resolution to fulfil

²² This recourse to the clairvoyant method also underlies Schücking's statement in *The Meaning of Hamlet*, trans. Graham Rawson (London, 1937), p. 21, that "the strangely fatalistic element in Hamlet's thought . . . is certainly not in accordance with Shakespeare's personal attitude."

²³ P. 146; Granville-Barker, a more practical man of the theater, describes the tone of the phrase as "curt, commanding," in *Prefaces*, I, 146, n. 23.

the appointed duty [is indicated]. On the contrary, [the speech in defiance of augury and related passages] seem to express that kind of religious resignation which, however beautiful in one aspect, really deserves the name of fatalism rather than of faith in Providence. . . .²⁴

This is the burden of most post-Bradleyan criticism, based like his on a naive voluntarism. The key words in this sort of criticism are "fatalism," "passivity," and "despair"; they are signs by which we easily recognize those critics who have enrolled themselves in the Blame-the-Prince campaign.

Schücking sees a "fatalistic belief in man's impotence against an all-powerful providence" and "an admission that [Hamlet's] heart has grown old, and that life holds nothing more of value for him."²⁵ Parrott feels that "Hamlet has drifted into a deadening fatalism, and, as a result, Fate takes charge of the action."²⁶ Donald Stauffer sees a "desperate stoicism" in the speech; "augury is defied, destiny is bitterly acknowledged, and a passive readiness is all. . . ." For Stauffer, *Hamlet* is the product of the "most desperate period of Shakespeare's thought."²⁷

James Feibleman believes that "while Hamlet is endeavoring to discover the *modus operandi* for bringing the two worlds together . . . for making the ideal actual, events force his hand. He is driven to impulsive action by what happens around him. . . . The moral is that the man of contemplation, who endeavors to carry into actual practise the absolute and uncompromising variety of idealism, will end with the worst sort of impulsive, irrational and unconsidered action: undecided, immediate and arbitrary action."²⁸ H. B. Charlton finds that "the will to act in the one necessary direction is first frustrated and then gradually atrophied. Worst of all, the recognition of the will's impotence is accepted as . . . the calm attainment of a higher benignity, whereas it is nothing more than a fatalist's surrender of his personal responsibility. That is the nadir of Hamlet's fall."²⁹

Dover Wilson writes:

Because he has reached the fifth act, the catastrophe of the tragedy, which involves the death of his hero, [Shakespeare] is obliged to show us Hamlet as himself once again, greater and more admirable than ever before; otherwise the play would have ended dismally with a sense of utter frustration and inadequacy. Yet never to the last moment does he allow us to forget the fatal flaw in Hamlet's character. The feat is accomplished by means similar to those employed by musicians who wish to introduce new themes without relinquishing the old. The upper half of the score is filled with all sorts of fresh matter to arrest interest and secure sympathy, while all the time the bass throbs on "failure, failure, failure!"³⁰

²⁴ *Shakespearean Tragedy*, pp. 144-145; compare Bradley's conception of Hamlet's "secretly" despairing with Tillyard's conception, previously cited, of the likelihood of "unexpressed motives" in *Hamlet*.

²⁵ *Meaning of Hamlet*, trans. Rawson, p. 167.

²⁶ Thomas Marc Parrott and R. S. Telfer, edd., *Shakespeare* (New York, 1931), II, 403; reprinted in Parrott, Telfer, and Edward Hubler, edd., *Shakespeare* (New York, 1938), p. 674.

²⁷ *Shakespeare's World of Images* (New York, 1949), pp. 126, 129.

²⁸ "The Theory of Hamlet," *J. H. L.*, VII (1946), 148-149.

²⁹ *Shakespearean Tragedy* (Cambridge, Engl., 1948), p. 103.

³⁰ J. Dover Wilson, *What Happens in HAMLET*, pp. 236-237, 268; on p. vii, Wilson confesses that he finds it difficult to look at *Hamlet* except through Bradley's eyes.

The critical agony reaches a climax in Paul Arnold's deposition:

Hamlet n'est ni le rêveur flaubertien, ni le douteur mallarméen. Il est le sage qui a pénétré ou croit avoir pénétré l'essence de l'être, l'essence du monde et qui dès lors, ayant compris la vanité de toute agitation, se complait dans le repos de l'inaction—mais n'a point la constance de s'y tenir. . . .

Shakespeare proclame l'inutilité de la vie qui ne peut plus désormais avoir de sens que l'absurde volonté du ciel: Ciel monstrueux! Le ciel a tout prévu, tout voulu, et "il y a une spéciale providence en la chute d'un moineau." Cette intuition aussi d'Hamlet agonisant n'est plus qu'une dérision.³¹

Such quotations speak for themselves. The desperation ascribed to Hamlet is the existentialist despair of critics who must at all costs believe in their own free will. Hamlet is their scapegoat.

IV

One turns with relief from these outcries to the critics who find some sort of positive regeneration in *Hamlet*. Wylie Sypher proposes an existential Hamlet, but hardly on the model of M. Arnold's:

[One might] speak of Hamlet not as existent but rather as passing through an existential phase into which he is precipitated by the wedding of Gertrude to Claudius and the intimations of his own ambivalence. The phase terminates with Hamlet's sudden recognition just before the duel with Laertes that there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. With this recognition he transcends his "absurd sensibility," which in retrospect amounts to an aberration. . . . His values are translated [by reason of Gertrude's lechery] from "reason" to "absurdity". . . . But at the end the focus shifts; the "normal" sensibility is reestablished. The existential insight was after all delusion.³²

Theodore Spencer, too, finds that at the end of the play Hamlet is no longer "passion's slave," but a man who sees himself as a part of the order of things: "to be resigned, as Hamlet is resigned, is to be made, by experience instead of by theory, once more aware of the world's order. . . . We have seen the purgation of a soul, and when Fortinbras enters at the end to be the king that Hamlet might have been, we know in another way and on another level . . . that we have also seen, with the accomplishment of Hamlet's revenge, the purgation of a state."³³ For Fergusson also, Hamlet's progress is seen as purgation: "We are certainly intended to feel that Hamlet, however darkly and uncertainly he worked, had discerned the way to be obedient to his deepest values, and accomplished some sort of purgatorial progress for himself and Denmark."³⁴

John Paterson and Joseph E. Baker present more overtly philosophical

³¹ "Raisons d'Hamlet," *Les lettres*, I (1945), 123-124.

³² "Hamlet: The Existential Madness," *Nation*, CLXII (1946), 750-751.

³³ *Shakespeare and the Nature of Man*, pp. 108-109.

³⁴ *Idea of a Theater*, pp. 132-133; but there is an implied contradiction in the earlier statement, about both Claudius and Hamlet, that "Shakespeare usually grants his victims a moment of great clarity when it is too late—and then shows them *returning, like automata*, to 'ravin down their proper bane' and die" (p. 126, my italics).

analyses of the play, which may be used as touchstones for judging Feibleman's attempt to trick out the Coleridgean theory in formal philosophical terms. Paterson writes: "if . . . in the end, Hamlet has ceased to be the anguished and hysterical personality, it is because he has won at last through the evil tangle of appearances to a clear apprehension of the truth, and knows he rests on firm ground. His final consideration, in fact, even as he draws his last breath, is that the truth be pronounced and his part in the drama cleared beyond all possibility of misconstruction."⁸⁶ Baker generalizes further: "an action 'lies' in its true nature not in 'this world' but 'above,' in the realm of the ideal. . . . Moral laws, to Hamlet, do not depend for their validity upon the perceptions of the individual mind. The Everlasting has fix'd his canon 'gainst self-slaughter, and 'foul deeds will rise, Though all the earth o'erwhelm them.' There is in this play as strong a sense of destiny, and of a moral order in the universe, as one can find in Greek tragedy, though it is expressed in Christian terminology."⁸⁶

All of these passages are concerned primarily with the speech in defiance of augury and serve to emphasize the truth of Hardin Craig's succinct remark, "to trace the steps by which Hamlet arrived at this state of mind is to master the meaning of the play."⁸⁷ Craig's own analysis of this development, rightly viewed in the light of the morality play,⁸⁸ starts from the assumption that "the ethical contest in the play is not so much between passion and reason as between passion and a self-mastery which leads to indifference to the blows of fortune." His analysis may be summarized briefly in his own words:

The soliloquies show Hamlet's progression toward both action and peace of mind. Horatio stands on one side of him as a man who has self-mastery, and Fortinbras on the other as a man to whom action is instinct. . . . [When the King is at prayer, Hamlet] decides against immediate action, not through cowardice, but through thinking too precisely on the event. He still lacks that indifference to consequences which he must achieve before he becomes the perfect hero. . . . Hamlet's failure to act is not due to mere procrastination. It is due to a desire to act too exquisitely, to regulate all the consequences. . . .

That Hamlet has advanced to a more philosophic state of mind with reference to the value of life appears in his conversation with Horatio in the churchyard. . . . Hard on this scene, as if to sound the warning of action and passion, comes the great outburst at the grave of Ophelia.

At this point, Craig discusses the development of Hamlet's relations with Ophelia, which lead up to his outburst at the grave. Thereupon, we are told that "we are prepared to reread the little conversation between Hamlet and

⁸⁶ "The Word in *Hamlet*," *SQ*, II (1951), 54.

⁸⁷ "The Philosophy of Hamlet," *Essays in Dramatic Literature: The Parrott Presentation Volume* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1935), pp. 467, 464.

⁸⁸ *An Interpretation of Shakespeare* (New York, 1948), p. 186.

⁸⁹ See his article, "Morality Plays and the Elizabethan Drama," *SQ*, I (1950), 64-72; also Farnham, *The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy*, (Berkeley, Calif., 1936), Howard Baker, *Induction to Tragedy* (Baton Rouge, 1939), and Sidney Thomas, *The Antic Hamlet and Richard III* (New York, 1943). I wish to record here my debt to William Elton for his stimulating criticism of this essay; he is currently examining the relations between the moralities and Elizabethan tragedy.

Horatio before the duel (V, ii, 219-36). . . ." After quoting the passage, he concludes: "it is usual to say that a typical tragedy is concerned with a conflict of wills and with a great personality engaged in a struggle that ends disastrously. This definition applies to Oedipus, Agamemnon, Faustus, Othello, and Macbeth. It hardly applies to Hamlet, who was never the minion of fortune. . . . Does Hamlet not therefore present a different kind of tragedy from that called for in the traditional definition?" (Pp. 182, 187-193.)

Craig's general sense of the pattern of the play strikes me as excellent, but his argument is weakened by the facts that, at crucial points, his meaning is not sufficiently explicit, and that the continuity of his analysis is marred by logical ellipses. The final question is unnecessary; it is answered by the statements that lead up to it. Hamlet was the minion of fortune, as a prince and "most immediate to [Claudius'] throne"; and the tragedy is primarily concerned with a conflict of wills, a cat-and-mouse game played by "mighty opposites."³⁹ The statement that Hamlet's refusal to kill Claudius at prayer is due to a desire to regulate all the consequences is, in one sense, correct, if we take the particular consequence to be the damnation of Claudius; but it is not due to a desire to act "too exquisitely." Here Craig agrees too easily with Feibleman, Tillyard, and the critics who accept Claudius' argument that "no place indeed should murder sanctuarize."⁴⁰ The most serious weakness in the analysis, however, inheres in the phrase, "indifference to consequences"; Hamlet must arrive, in Craig's view, at such indifference, and because he has not yet done so he refuses to kill the praying King. The argument is weak because no distinction is drawn between indifference to consequences in this world, the buffetings of fortune, and attention to possible consequences in the next, the dread of something after death. This is the crux of the matter. Against this background, I shall present my own analysis of the regeneration of Hamlet.

V

Hamlet, the most self-conscious⁴¹ of Shakespeare's tragic heroes, is also the most rational; even Brutus and Coriolanus distrust reason more than he. This fact has confused some critics, because an over-reliance on human reason, attended by a strong sense of individualism and a belief in untrammelled free will, is the hallmark of the Shakespearian villain.⁴² This attitude usually

³⁹ *Hamlet*, ed. G. L. Kittredge (Boston, 1939), pp. xviii-xx, and Fergusson, *Idea of a Theater*, pp. 105-108, present analyses of the play in terms of this conflict.

⁴⁰ See note 7 above.

⁴¹ Stoll, *Shakespeare Studies*, p. 114, goes so far as to bracket Hamlet and Iago as "Shakespeare's most intellectual and conscious characters."

⁴² See Stoll, *Shakespeare Studies*, ch. VII, Sprague, *Shakespeare and the Audience*, ch. VIII, K. O. Myrick, "The Theme of Damnation in Shakespearean Tragedy," *S. P.*, XXXVIII (1941), 221-245, and Don Cameron Allen, *The Star-Crossed Renaissance* (Durham, 1941), passim. The *loci classici* are the speeches of Edmund, "We make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars" (*Lear* I.ii.125-145, my italics), and Cassius, "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, / But in ourselves, that we are underlings" (*Caesar* I.ii.140-141); but Cassius experiences a regeneration just before his death: "You know that I held Epicurus strong / And his opinion. Now I change my mind / And partly credit things that do presage" (*Caesar* V.i.76-79). Compare Roy W. Battenhouse, *Marlowe's Tamburlaine* (Nashville, 1941), p. 88, on the point that good Elizabethans felt it "necessary to establish the fact of Providence" against the "Epicureans." Iago acts on the same principles as Edmund (*Oth.* I.i.49-55); his anti-heroic attitude toward reputation implicitly denies the power of fate (*Oth.* II.iii.266-277, and the hypocritical reversal in III.iii.155-

implies disbelief in, but always understanding of, the less rational, traditional values that the heroic characters hold in common, less rational because these values limit the validity of reason and deny the attendant freedom of will affirmed by the villains. We may suspect, then, that the significant arrangement of problems in *Hamlet* and the question of the regeneration of the hero have to do with the development of his attitude toward reason and his use of it.⁴³

The rational faculty is that which distinguishes men from beasts, and the distinction is emphasized by Hamlet at crucial points in the play:

O God! a beast that wants discourse of reason
Would have mourn'd longer. . . . (I.ii.150-151)

What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason!
how infinite in faculties . . . in apprehension how
like a god! (II.ii.316-319)

What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.
Sure he that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust in us unus'd. (IV.iv.33-39, omitted from Folios)

Before the revelations of the Ghost, Hamlet attempts to use his reason to bridge the gap between his former values and the world as he now sees it, an unweeded garden (I.ii.135).⁴⁴ This remains a major concern at least until he attempts to regenerate Gertrude in the closet scene, but it becomes subordinate to the larger question of fulfilling the Ghost's commission to avenge him and thereby prevent the royal bed of Denmark from continuing to be a couch for luxury and damned incest (I.v.82-83). After the scene with the

161). Claudius, like Edmund and Iago, understands, if he does not believe in, the heroic attitude; one of his arguments against Hamlet's grief at the beginning of the play is that "it shows a will most incorrect to heaven" (*Ham.* I.ii.95). Macbeth, an ambiguous villain-hero, strongly believes in fate. His tragedy is not that he attempts to master his fate in the sense of going against it, but that he attempts to take his fate, as revealed to him by the witches, into his own hands; unlike Hamlet, he tries to make his life accord with a supernatural revelation without questioning the authenticity of the revelation.

⁴³ Craig, quoted above, sees an ethical contest in *Hamlet* between passion and "a self-mastery which leads to indifference to the blows of fortune," rather than between the more common Elizabethan antagonists, passion and reason. He tries to relate the play to "the newly revived stoic psychology of the passions," which about this time chiefly affected the drama of Jonson and Chapman, "though Shakespeare himself was affected"; it led to an "important change in ethical theory," which accounts for the fact that Marston, Chapman, and Jonson "were critical, worldly, and disillusioned" (*Interpretation*, 181, 179; see his analysis of three phases of the literary uses of psychology from Lyly to Ford, *Enchanted Glass* [New York, 1936], pp. 122-123). But Shakespeare worked more consistently within the framework of the popular dramatic tradition than did the new dramatists of the early seventeenth century. In my view, the conflict in *Hamlet* is most fruitfully seen as one between reason and passion during the first four acts, in which the words "reason" and "passion" occur 25 times; in Act V, however, where each word occurs only once, I find that the conflict is transcended in terms more inclusive than "self-mastery" and "indifference."

⁴⁴ Later he sees the world as a prison (II.ii.249-253, present only in Folios), comparable to the purgatorial "prison house" of the Ghost (I.v.11-14); still later he characterizes the Danes as beasts ruled by a beast (v.ii.88).

Ghost, Hamlet uses his reason to test the validity of the revelations⁴⁵ and to prove the villainy of Claudius, so that he may kill him "in perfect conscience" (V.ii.67),⁴⁶ not "pat" (III.iii.73) as the critics who accuse him of over-scrupulosity would have him do.⁴⁷ Reason is used, in both instances, to bridge the gap between the ideal and the real, to test appearance for reality.

Hamlet's self-accusations are irrelevant; they are the subjective counterpart of his antic disposition. Whereas the latter, an apparent abandonment of reason, is adopted both to conceal and to express more safely the conflict between reason and passion in him, the former demonstrate that conflict in his mind. As Stoll puts it, "the charge of cowardice and mouthing that he brings against himself [in the third soliloquy (II.ii.576-633)] he immediately brushes aside. . . . Unlike other Shakespearean confessions (or warranted self-reproaches) in soliloquy, none of these is confirmed by the comments of the other characters or by the hero's confidences imparted to them."⁴⁸ His self-accusations occur at points where his reason is dominated by his passions. Thus those critics who accuse him of cowardice err in the same way as those who think him mad; the latter accept his deliberately irrational appearance to others in the play as reality, whereas the former accept his appearance to himself, at his most irrational, as reality.⁴⁹

Like Claudius, Hamlet will not act rashly⁵⁰ as Shakespeare's other tragic heroes do, although, with the obvious exception of Macbeth, they always believe themselves to be acting in "perfect conscience." Unlike Claudius, he never accepts the voluntaristic philosophy implicit in the advice to Laertes, so often held against Hamlet by the Coleridgeans:

That we would do,
We should do when we would; for this "would" changes,
And hath abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents. . . .

(IV.vii.119-122)⁵¹

⁴⁵ "I'll have grounds/More relative than this" (II.ii.631-632).

⁴⁶ Purity of conscience is a value recognized by all of the major participants in the action. Witness Claudius, "How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!" (III.i.50); Gertrude, "So full of artless jealousy is guilt/It spills itself in fearing to be spilt" (IV.v.19-20); Laertes, "And yet it is almost against my conscience" (V.ii.307).

⁴⁷ Dover Wilson, *What Happens in HAMLET*, p. 272, misquotes by omission in order to avoid this important contrast: "Shakespeare shows us that, but for the discovery of the crowning treachery in the fence with Laertes and his excitement thereat, he never would have killed the King. He may demand passionately, 'Is't not perfect conscience . . . further evil?' But it is only the old reflection: 'now might I do it.'" Wilson conveniently omits the adverb, "pat," and wrenches the meter about to fit his preconceptions about Hamlet by italicizing "might."

⁴⁸ *Shakespeare and Other Masters*, p. 153; cf. Peter Alexander, *Shakespeare's Life and Art* (London, 1939), p. 156, "it is Hamlet himself who is responsible for the common report that he is a dreamer with just enough sense of reality to be ashamed of his own conduct. And accepting this admission as proved the critics proceed to pass judgment according to their temper."

⁴⁹ Nor is the Ghost's accusation of an "almost blunted purpose" relevant (III.iv.111). A. C. Sprague, *Shakespeare and the Audience*, p. 192, cites Kittredge to the effect that the Ghost would have little "sympathy for Hamlet's previous doubts, knowing as he does that they are unfounded—that he is not a devil!" More to the point, perhaps, is the fact that Hamlet has spent almost a hundred lines upbraiding his mother just before the entrance of the Ghost, instead of leaving her to heaven (I.v.86). This is emphasized by Harold R. Walley, "Shakespeare's Conception of Hamlet," *PMLA*, XLVIII (1933), 777-798 (esp. 796-797).

⁵⁰ Gertrude calls the killing of Polonius a rash and bloody deed (III.iv.26), but Hamlet puts the rashness off on Polonius (III.iv.31).

⁵¹ Dover Wilson quotes this as the epigraph to his final chapter in *What Happens in HAMLET*,

On the contrary, he comes to the realization of the other tragic heroes that reason is not enough, "our deep plots do pall" (V.ii.11), and he does so, notably, about the same time that he comes to feel that he may fulfil the Ghost's commission "in perfect conscience" (V.ii.67).

The realization is brought about by the events associated with his abortive voyage to England, the significance of which has been generally overlooked. Schücking was able to write that "the incredible experiences that Hamlet has had at sea certainly fit better into the crude background of some contemporary picaresque novel than into Shakespearian drama, with its psychological subtlety and truth to life."⁵² But they are not, as they might seem at the crude level of plot summary, a mere melodramatic contrivance to kill off Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and to get Hamlet back to Denmark for the catastrophe. The experiences at sea and the play-within-a-play are the two turning points of this dramatic structure. The experiences at sea are symbolic of the power of fate, or Providence,⁵³ in the same way, for example, that coincidence is symbolic in the work of a lesser writer, Thomas Hardy, whose use of that device has recently been defended in these terms by several critics⁵⁴ writing in healthy reaction against the widespread realistic expectation that stems from the confusion of art with life. Briefly, Hamlet felt, before he left Denmark, that all occasions informed against him (IV.iv.32, omitted from Folios); while at sea, on the contrary, all occasions informed in his favor.

p. 239, and, on p. 265, comments, "it has often been remarked that we have the whole moral of *Hamlet* in the lines . . ." Cf. note 42 above. The relevant attitude common to Shakespearian tragedy is expressed concisely by Friar Laurence (*Romeo* II.iii.27-30):

Two such opposed kings encamp them still
In man as well as herbs—grace and rude will;
And where the worser is predominant,
Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

Claudius' speech, which is omitted from the Folios, should be compared with that of the Player-King (III.ii.198-199, 204-205), who places a different emphasis on the idea, and with the speeches of Lady Macbeth (*Macb.* IV.ii.41-45) and Macbeth (IV.i.145-149).

⁵² *Meaning of Hamlet*, trans. Rawson, p. 165.

⁵³ Cf. Henry Hitch Adams, *English Domestic or, Homiletic Tragedy: 1575-1642* (New York, 1943), p. 18:

One of the notions most useful to pamphleteers, writers of homiletic treatises, and playwrights was that Divine Providence intervened in the lives of men to assure the operations of divine justice. Divine Providence is a specific power of God which employs signs, portents, coincidences, seeming accidents, plagues, natural or unnatural phenomena, or minor miracles to dispense rewards and punishments according to His laws, either through His direct action or through His agents. The phrase "Divine Providence" was common enough in nondramatic literature, but was seldom employed by the playwrights. For this reason, providential operations have commonly gone unrecognized in investigations of the drama of the period.

Adams also writes, p. 142: "As in the nondramatic literature, interventions of Divine Providence appear in all the murder plays of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to punish vice, to reward virtue, to protect innocence, and to aid the authorized agents of God." Battenhouse, *Marlowe's Tamburlaine*, p. 86, writes: "It is not too much to say that the doctrine of Providence was the chief apologetic interest of Reformation times." For the Elizabethan view of Providence, see these books and Farnham, *Medieval Heritage*, passim. On the nature and general importance of religious literature of the time (almost 50% of *STC* books), see Louis B. Wright, "The Significance of Religious Writings in the English Renaissance," *J. H. I.*, I (1940), 59-68, and Helen C. White, *Social Criticism in Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth Century* (New York, 1944).

⁵⁴ Most notably by Albert J. Guerard, *Thomas Hardy: the Novels and Stories* (Cambridge, Mass., 1949).

Hamlet explicitly moralizes these experiences for the benefit of his confidant, Horatio:

Rashly—

And prais'd be rashness for it; let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well
When our deep plots do pall; and that should learn us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will— (V.ii.6-12)

To which, Horatio responds, "That is most certain."⁵⁵ Hamlet's "indiscretion" was to steal Claudius' commission, devise a new one, and return it to its sleeping guardians. When Horatio asks, "How was this seal'd?" Hamlet replies, "Why, even in that was *heaven ordinaunt*" (V.ii.47-48, my italics). He had with him, providentially, his father's signet. The next day saw the sea-fight with the pirates; "in the grapple I boarded them. On the instant they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy . . ." (IV.vi.17-20). Heaven's ordinance in all this is deeply felt by Hamlet, who, even before leaving Denmark, had described himself as heaven's "scourge and minister" (III.iv.175).⁵⁶ The entrance of Providence into the action had been adequately prepared. Twice in Act IV divinity was mentioned.⁵⁷ Most significant of all, the Player-King had remarked:

Our wills and fates do so contrary run
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their *ends* none of our own.
(III.ii.221-223, my italics)⁵⁸

Fergusson comments that "the Player-King represents very pithily the basic vision of human action in the play, at a level so deep that it applies to all the characters" and that "the Player-King seems to stand for Hamlet's father, and thus for the Ghost. . . ."⁵⁹ In this connection we should remember that in a sense, as Harry Levin points out, the Player-King seems to stand for Shakespeare himself: "Of the roles that the playwright may have played himself, we hear of one in particular, the ghost in *Hamlet*; but it is traditional for the

⁵⁵ The function of this choral comment is to emphasize the moral truth just expressed; cf. Gloucester's comment, "And that's true too" (*Lear* V.ii.11), in immediate response to Edgar's "Men must endure/Their going hence, even as their coming hither;/Ripeness is all. Come on."

⁵⁶ On "scourge" compare Paul H. Kocher, *Christopher Marlowe* (Chapel Hill, 1946), pp. 82-83: "It is sometimes contended that this notion always entailed for Elizabethans the villainy of the person who acted as Scourge. . . . Even strict Christian theory did not condemn all scourges as wicked men. . . . As far as Marlowe's [Tamburlaine] is concerned, the manner of introducing him as the Scourge of God in a passage in which he resolves to crush an overbearing Turk and release his Christian slaves proves unmistakably that the title is meant to confer sympathy, not to take it away." On "minister" compare "Prayer for the Queen," *Book of Common Prayer*, as cited by Richmond Noble, *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge* (London, 1935), p. 152: "So rule the heart of thy chosen servant Elizabeth our Queen and Governour, that she (knowing whose minister she is)" [sic].

⁵⁷ Claudius, "There's such divinity doth hedge a king" (IV.v.123), and Hamlet on Fortinbras, "Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,/Makes mouths at the invisible event" (IV.iv.49-50, omitted from Folios). There are only these three occurrences of the word in the play.

⁵⁸ Noble, *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge*, p. 208, cites Proverbs xvi.9: "A man deviseth a way in his heart: but it is the Lord that ordereth his goings."

⁵⁹ *Idea of a Theater*, pp. 126, 124.

actor who plays that role to double as the First Player."⁶⁰ Hamlet has learned, from his providential experiences, what the First Player pretended to know in the character of the Player-King, just as, earlier, he had learned how to be passionate by contrasting his motive and cue for passion with the pretended motive of the First Player in his delivery of the speech on Hecuba.⁶¹

Horatio is astonished by Hamlet's revelation of the depths of Claudius' villainy:

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, thinks't thee, stand me now upon—

He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother;
Popp'd in between th' election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such coz'nage—is't not perfect conscience
To quit him with this arm? And is't not to be damn'd
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short; the interim is mine,

And a man's life's no more than to say "one." (62-74; 68ff. present only in Folios)

As Hankins points out, in the speech on perfect conscience Hamlet rests his case before Horatio, who was not passion's slave while Hamlet was still beset by passion, who is "e'en as *just* a man/As e'er my conversation coped withal." To kill Claudius is now "a matter of public duty and not merely of private vengeance. . . . Thus the two friends reach a joint conclusion based on the ideal of justice."⁶² Hamlet contrasts damnation with perfect conscience, thus emphasizing his attention to consequences in the next world. He has arrived at effective resolution—resolution of the conflict between passion⁶³ and reason, and resolution to act, but, as we shall see, to act only by the ordinance of heaven. "The interim is mine" is not, then, ironic, as Tillyard "suspects";⁶⁴ it expresses Hamlet's certainty that he is heaven's scourge and minister and that Providence will furnish him with an approved opportunity for killing Claudius, just as

⁶⁰ "Explication of the Player's Speech," K. R., XII (1950), 296. Cf. Dover Wilson, *What Happens in HAMLET*, p. 162, n. 1.

⁶¹ In the third soliloquy (II.ii.577-598); see the article by Levin, previously cited.

⁶² John Erskine Hankins, *The Character of Hamlet* (Chapel Hill, 1941), p. 74. Hamlet's task is now like that of Brutus or Othello; he must make a sacrifice for the general good: Brutus joined the conspirators "only in a general honest thought/And common good to all" (*Caesar* V.v.71-72); Desdemona's protestations of innocence make Othello "call what I intend to do/A murder, which I thought a sacrifice" (V.ii.64-65).

⁶³ His "tow'ring passion" (V.ii.80) at Ophelia's grave occurs, of course, after his return to Denmark, but the passion there is personal and not in direct relation to his chief aims. It is part of a scene which deepens his awareness of death and adds dimension to his humanity; it may be seen, in the light of my later analysis, as a test of his resolution by Providence; in any event, his resolution is unaffected by it.

⁶⁴ P. 146; the tone of this phrase has been variously described: Dover Wilson, *What Happens in HAMLET*, p. 272, feels it to be impatient; Granville-Barker, *Prefaces*, I, 250, calls it "coldly confident"; Stoll, *Shakespeare Studies*, p. 139, writes, "only through the spectacles of the critics can be discerned anything approaching such an ironic effect. . . . Hamlet's [heroic words], if any man's, do not [ring false and hollow]. . . ."

it furnished him with the opportunity to steal the grand commission from Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to seal the new one, and to return to Denmark alone through the agency of "thieves of mercy."

These implications are further developed in the ensuing sequences with Osric, the attendant Lord, and Horatio, before the entrance of the court for the fencing match. Like the experiences at sea, Hamlet feels the proposed fencing match to be somehow providential. Osric's news of the wager, coincidentally, interrupts Hamlet's self-justification to Horatio, and the interruption occurs just as Hamlet turns the conversation to Laertes, by the image of whose cause he sees the portraiture of his (V.ii.75-80).⁶⁵ Just as he resolves to court Laertes' favor, an opportunity presents itself. Hamlet's answer to Osric is ambiguously couched in the form of a test of Providence's purposes:

Sir, I will walk here in the hall. If it please his Majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me. Let the foils be brought, the gentlemen willing, and the King hold his purpose, I will win for him if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits. (V.ii.180-185, my italics)

By the common Elizabethan analogy of King with God,⁶⁶ the larger meaning of the speech is that Hamlet will serve the purposes of Providence and the Ghost (win for him), if Providence still holds the purpose it held in the series of coincidences that revealed the full extent of Claudius' villainy to Hamlet and brought him alone back to Denmark; if not, he will gain shame, by a useless act, and the odd hits, further blows of fortune.

The attendant Lord's report of His Majesty's question makes even this minor character, like Osric before him, an unconscious instrument of Providence, which, in effect, is asking Hamlet this question in response to his test:

My lord, *his Majesty commended him to you* by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall. *He sends to know if you*

⁶⁵ Dover Wilson's comment, p. 272, is that Hamlet, "as Dr. Bradley notes, immediately changes the subject." But see note 53 above on the importance of such coincidences. The passage about Laertes is not found in the good Quartos; our text is from the Folios, but there is a garbled version of the passage in Q1, ll. 2014 ff.

⁶⁶ Shakespeare's use of the analogy is especially apparent in the histories, most of all in *Richard II* and, ironically, in *Richard III*. A King is "the deputy elected by the Lord" (*R.II.III.ii.57*), "God's substitute" (*R.II.I.ii.37*). Noble, *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge*, p. 152, cites Biblical authority for the idea, the King as "the Lords anointed," in I Sam. xxiv.6 and xxvi.9. By the Supremacy Act of 1534, the King was officially recognized as "the supreme head of the Church of England," and when Elizabeth came to the throne the Supremacy Act of 1559 reaffirmed this recognition (*Documents of the Christian Church*, ed. Henry Bettenson [New York, 1947], pp. 321, 332-333). Thus, in Elizabethan England, the analogy of King with God was doubly strong. Furthermore, the official homilies of the Elizabethan church push the equation to extremes: "As the name of a King is very often attributed and given unto God in the holy Scriptures; so doth God himself in the same Scriptures sometime vouchsafe to communicate his Name with earthly Princes, terming them gods; doubtless for that similitude of government which they have, or should have, not unlike unto God their King" (as quoted in Alfred Hart, *Shakespeare and the Homilies* [Melbourne, 1934], p. 41). And the future James I wrote in 1598: "kings are not only God's lieutenants upon earth, and sit upon God's throne, but even by God himself they are called Gods" ("Trew Law of Free Monarchies," *The Political Works of James I*, ed. C. H. McIlwain [Cambridge, Mass., 1918], p. 307). Claudius, of course, applies the idea to himself in the speech on the divinity that hedges Kings (IV.v.123-125) and in his response to Gertrude's information that Hamlet has killed Polonius: "It will be laid to us, whose providence/Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt/This mad young man" (IV.i.17-19, my italics). But Providence shortly intervenes to return the mad young man to his haunts.

pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time. (V.ii. 203-207, my italics; 203-218 omitted from Folios)

Hamlet's answer is: "*I am constant to my purposes; they follow the King's pleasure.* If his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whensoever, *provided* I be so able as now" (V.ii.208-211, my italics). This speech is ambiguous in the same way as Hamlet's earlier speech. He is referring both to his immediate and general purposes. By "the King" he immediately means Claudius, the beast who is "lord of beasts" (V.ii.88), and more generally Old Hamlet, on whom "every god did seem to set his seal" (III.iv.61), and God Himself, the "King of Kings." The attendant Lord to whom this speech is directed understands only the simpler, immediate meaning, but to Hamlet, Horatio, and the audience, the more general meaning is stronger. The rest of the speech is equally ambiguous,⁶⁷ and its larger meaning is further developed a few lines later, in Hamlet's last conversation with Horatio alone (V.ii.219-235). It is this development of the more general meaning of the series of ambiguous remarks, together with the coincidental references to Laertes, that betoken a providential purpose in the fencing match and make Hamlet certain that he will "win at the odds" (221).

All occasions are informing for him now, but he feels "such a kind of gaingiving as would perhaps trouble a woman" (226-227). Horatio suggests, "If your mind dislike anything, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither and say you are not fit" (228-229). But the womanly gaingiving is subjective and hardly sufficient reason to forestall what Providence has arranged. The objectivity of the coincidental references to Laertes and the unconscious ambiguity of the attendant Lord's message from His Majesty far outweigh a subjective foreboding. The match is not to be forestalled:

Not a whit, we defy augury; there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be. (230-235)⁶⁸

⁶⁷ The ambiguities of Hamlet's speeches in V.ii show the serious side of the double-talk he habitually uses when speaking before any characters in the play other than Horatio. The characteristic punning and quibbling of his speeches is emphasized by W. H. Clemen in *The Development of Shakespeare's Imagery* (Cambridge, Mass., 1951), p. 110 and notes. Roy W. Battenhouse, in an article ("Hamlet's Apostrophe on Man: Clue to the Tragedy," *PMLA*, LXVI [1951], 1073-1113) that submits the play to a Thomistic inquisition, concluding that it is the "Tragedy of Unbaptized Man" (p. 1111) and condemning Hamlet the man for his pagan despair (or lack of "Christian cheer" [p. 1102]), specifically attacks Hamlet's characteristic double-talk: "Hamlet's use of 'riddling' speech is in accord with the pagan religious notion that mystic doctrines should be kept inviolable from the common herd by means of knots and riddles" (p. 1082). The notion seems less pagan in the mouth of Christ, explaining to his disciples why he always uses parables in speaking to the multitudes (Matt. xiii.11 ff., 34; Mark iv.11-12, 34; John x.6, xvi.25).

⁶⁸ Dover Wilson, *What Happens in Hamlet*, pp. 273-274, remarks: "Both nobility and weakness are exemplified in the business of the fencing match which Hamlet ought never to have undertaken, and by means of which the catastrophe is effected. We love him for the very carelessness with which he falls in with the designs of his enemies, culpable as that carelessness is. . . . We love him, again, for the fatalism, reliance upon Providence, call it what you will, which he employs to justify this carelessness. . . . Hamlet is fey, as heroes have been since the dawn of literature; but was ever feydom so wonderfully set forth, or a doomed hero more adorable?" [My italics.] It is perhaps wiser to resist the temptation to ask further rhetorical questions.

We have returned to the crucial speech, which here merits rather detailed explication.

"We defy augury": the immediate meaning is, "I scorn this womanly ganging"; the literal meaning is, "We men (who believe in Providence) set at nought divination from the flight of birds (according to the Old Testament injunctions against the practise of augury)." The specific injunctions are "Ye shall not . . . practise augury" (Lev. xix.26) and "There shall not be found with thee any one . . . that practiseth augury" (Deut. xviii.10).⁶⁹

"There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow": this associates with the strict meaning of augury as "divination from the flight of birds" and with the Biblical prohibition, for it echoes Christ's commission to his disciples as reported in the Gospels of SS. Matthew and Luke:⁷⁰ "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father:/but the very hairs of your head are all numbered./Fear not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt. x.29-31). It also echoes a speech written by Shakespeare shortly before he wrote *Hamlet* and spoken by old Adam, whose part, like that of the Ghost in *Hamlet*, he is said to have played; Adam says the words when he gives his savings to Orlando to help him escape from his brother:

Take that [500 crowns], and he that doth the ravens feed,
Yea providently caters for the sparrow,
Be comfort to my age! (*A.Y.L.* II.iii.43-45)⁷¹

In Hamlet's speech, the Old Testament prohibition against the human attempt to read meanings into the flight of birds is set against the New Testament injunction to see the hand of Providence in a bird's fall. The fact that men are of more value than many sparrows and the implication that Providence's concern for man is proportionately greater were well known to Shakespeare's audience and closely associated with the idea expressed in Hamlet's sentence. These ideas did not require overt statement in order to be taken as part of the meaning of the speech. To the Elizabethans, then, Hamlet was demonstrating his acceptance of Christ's injunction, "Fear not therefore," as clearly as if he had said so in so many words. This is not deadening fatalism but good Christian doctrine, if somewhat colored later by neo-stoicism.

Roy Walker, who disagrees with the Bradleyan view that the speech is fatalistic, argues that Hamlet "had come to believe that he was an instrument of Providence, heaven's scourge and minister, and that what was required of

⁶⁹ D. C. Allen, *The Star-Crossed Renaissance*, pp. 118-119, cites William Perkins' *The Four Great Liers* (1585) to the effect that buyers of astrological prognostications show contempt for Providence. See Louis B. Wright, "William Perkins: Elizabethan Apostle of 'Practical Divinity,'" *H. L. Q.*, III (1940), 171-196. Helen C. White, *Social Criticism in Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth Century*, p. 246, cites John Carpenter's *A Preparative to Contentation* (1597), sig. Z8v: "Everie man is to take the benefite of time: to keepe within the bounds of his vocation, and to depend on the divine providence."

⁷⁰ The reference to Matthew has been frequently noted; see also Luke xii.6-7.

⁷¹ Noble, *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge*, p. 192, notes that the references both to the ravens and the sparrow occur in the same chapter of Luke (xii.24, 6). For "ravens," Edward A. Armstrong, *Shakespeare's Imagination* (London, 1946), p. 78, n. 1, also cites Psalm cxlvii.9 and Job xxxviii.41. Neither author mentions Thersites' ironic exaggeration of the references to sparrows in Matthew and Luke (*Troi.* II.i.77-79).

him was acceptance of and obedience to *his own nature* in all its complexities and contradictions. . . .⁷² He interprets Hamlet's attitude as a "mysticism" that "must wait upon inspiration." But this is to deny Hamlet's awareness of Providence as objectively real and to make his final attitude too simply, and romantically, subjective. Hamlet has come to accept and obey Providence, not "his own nature"; that is his regeneration.⁷³

"The readiness is all": readiness means both prompt compliance and a state of preparation. Hamlet has already indicated his prompt compliance with the pleasure and purposes of Providence (see the "King" speeches above); here he also stresses the fact that he is prepared to meet his death in fulfilling providential purpose, that he has completely accepted his rôle as heaven's patient minister. The phrase bears a meaning and weight like that of the similar phrase in *Lear*:

Edg. Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
Ripeness is all. Come on.
Glou. And that's true too. (V.ii.9-11)

"Since no man knows . . . betimes": This sentence has long been taken as evidence of Shakespeare's acquaintance with Florio's translation of Montaigne's *Essays*; actually its roots are Biblical, though it is a commonplace of Renaissance neo-stoicism.⁷⁴ Shakespeare emphasized the idea in *Julius Caesar*, written a few years before *Hamlet*:

Caes. It seems to me most strange that men should fear,
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come. (II.ii.35-37)

Bru. That we shall die, we know; 'tis but the time,
And drawing days out, that men stand upon.

Cass. Why, he that cuts off twenty years of life
Cuts off so many years of fearing death.

Bru. Grant that, and then is death a benefit. (III.i.99-103)

Hamlet's sentence shifts the emphasis from the dread of something after death in another world to the vanity of wishing to know what will happen after one's death in this world.

Granville-Barker speaks of "the simple nobility" of this valediction, but his final comment on the speech reads: "it is to *no more than this*, at the last, that

⁷² *The Time is out of Joint*, p. 143, my italics; the quotations in my next sentence are from p. 144 of Walker.

⁷³ In this view, the play gradually reveals the double-edged irony in Claudius' early remark on Hamlet's grief: "It shows a will most incorrect to heaven" (I.ii.95).

⁷⁴ See J. M. Robertson, *Montaigne and Shakespeare* (London, 1897), and George Coffin Taylor, *Shakespeare's Debt to Montaigne* (Oxford, 1925). The problem of Shakespeare's debt to Montaigne is complicated by the fact that many of the parallels might very well have come from other sources, such as Timothy Bright (*Dover Wilson, What Happens in HAMLET*, p. 314) and Girolamo Cardano (Hardin Craig, "Hamlet's Book," *H. L. Q.*, No. 6 (1934), pp. 17-37). Theodore Spencer, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Man*, p. 109, calls Hamlet's sentence, "If it be now . . . readiness is all," a "neo-stoic Renaissance commonplace." Noble, *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge*, pp. 208-209, cites Biblical parallels, notably from the apocryphal *Ecclesiasticus*: "Feare not the iudgement of death. . . . Whether it be tenne, an hundred, or a thousande yeeres, death asketh not how long one hath liued" (xli.3-4, quoted in full in Noble, pp. 200-201).

the subtly questing mind has come."⁷⁵ One may well ask, "What more is there?" Within the philosophical scheme of Shakespearian tragedy, a scheme that we must describe as Christian (not deadening) Stoicism for want of a better term,⁷⁶ there is no more than this; but it is quite enough for a man to live by, as, to our knowledge, many Renaissance (or Baroque?) men did. It is explicitly the final meaning of *Lear* and *Julius Caesar*,⁷⁷ both written near this time, and implicitly the final meaning of *Othello* and *Macbeth*.

Hamlet's regeneration is the counterpart of "Hamlet's transformation," as Claudius termed it (II.ii.15), between the first two acts of the play. When he reappears in Elsinore, he no longer affects the slovenly dress of his antic disposition,⁷⁸ adopted in the place of princely mourning after the Ghost's revelations. He has undergone a second transformation, of dress as of manner, since his departure for England.⁷⁹ In Act I he was a student prince; in Act V he is the ordained minister of Providence. In the intervening acts he played two rôles: the apparent antic, modeled on the morality Vice, Dissimulation,⁸⁰ and Mankind, or Everyman, torn between the dictates of his reason and his melancholic passion. As in the morality plays, the conflict between man's divine nature, embodied in the rational soul, and his bestial nature, embodied in the animal soul, brings him to the verge of despair, from which he is saved by the intervention of Providence.⁸¹

Hamlet does not succumb to despair or become the victim of a deadening fatalism; rather he is the instrument of an inscrutable Providence to whom man is of more value than many sparrows. His is not the self-abandonment of a mystic; rather it is a willing compliance with the workings of heaven. He abandons neither reason nor passion; he transcends the conflict between them, and once he has done so there is no longer any need for passionate self-accusation. This together with the presence of Horatio as confidant accounts for the fact that there are no soliloquies in Act V. Hamlet reasons with Horatio about the justice of his cause, but at the same time he demonstrates that he has gone beyond reason in the realm of external action and now relies on the opportunities to be furnished by a watchful Providence. He has arrived at an attitude that bridges the gap between the real and the ideal and transcends the conflict

⁷⁵ *Prefaces*, I, 146, my italics. Cf. Moody E. Prior, "The Thought of *Hamlet* and the Modern Temper," *ELH*, XV (1948), 261-285, who writes of this speech (p. 275): "Hamlet's final comment on his philosophical problem . . . ends in an acceptance of uncertainty."

⁷⁶ See T. S. Eliot, "Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca," *Selected Essays*, pp. 107-120; Howard Baker, *Induction to Tragedy*, pp. 218-219; Hardin Craig, *Enchanted Glass*, pp. 197-198 and *passim*.

⁷⁷ See *Lear* V.ii.9-11, twice quoted above, and *Caesar* V.i.105-107, where Brutus speaks of arming himself "with patience/To stay the providence of some high powers/That govern us below."

⁷⁸ *Hamlet*, ed. J. Q. Adams (Boston, 1929), p. 224: "Hamlet's madness, as it impressed the audience of the Globe, was conspicuously a madness 'in clothes.'"

⁷⁹ As Polonius says, "For the apparel oft proclaims the man" (I.iii.72). Granville-Barker devotes considerable attention to Hamlet's three appearances in *Prefaces*, I, 232-233. We hear that Hamlet was "set naked" in Denmark by the pirates (IV.vii.44); like *Lear*, Hamlet becomes naked, "unaccommodated man" (*Lear*, III.iv.112) in the course of his regeneration.

⁸⁰ See Sidney Thomas, *The Antic Hamlet*, and note 38 above.

⁸¹ This is, of course, a consistent morality pattern. Shakespeare usually uses his Dukes (see Curtis B. Watson, "Shakspeare's Dukes," *S.A.B.*, XVI [1941], 33-41) and Friars, or, as in *Measure for Measure*, a Duke disguised as a Friar, as Providential figures to guide the action and save other characters from despair; Friar Laurence performs this function for Romeo (III.iii.108-165) and for Juliet (IV.i.68-126).

between appearance and reality, as well as that between passion and reason. That this growth implies his death is central to the tragic mystery.

In death, he is concerned with the order of the state which he has purged⁸² and with his reputation, the public concomitant of heroic virtue, as are other Shakespearian tragic heroes.⁸³ This too is part of his regeneration. He has not simply returned to the world view he held at the time of his father's death. Instead, he has reconciled the conflict between his former conception of the "normal" world and his later awareness of the evil inherent in the world as it is, or at any time might become. He recognizes his function in the restoration of "normal" order, and he arrives at his recognition of a divinity that shapes our ends, a fundamental change of attitude toward the meaning of his life and death, because the coincidental, or providential, experiences at sea demonstrated to him the limitations in such a universe of rational, planned action and led him to understand that a man must endure being stretched on the rack of this tough world, to understand the full implications of the statement, "the readiness is all." His final understanding does not mitigate his tragedy; rather it serves to increase the audience's sense of the waste, the heroic sacrifice, involved in setting right the time that was out of joint.

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⁸² See Fergusson, *Idea of a Theater*, for stress on the idea of Hamlet's, like Oedipus', purging the state of the evil that plagues it. H. H. Adams, *English Domestic . . . Tragedy*, p. 19, notes that "numerous pamphlets followed each visitation of the plague and stressed the wrath of God, His impatience with man's continued sin, and His Providence which was punishing the whole nation by means of the disease." This gives us a clue to the meaning of the disease imagery in *Hamlet*, which mounts in intensity and frequency in the last two acts of the play. Cf. Dover Wilson, *What Happens in HAMLET*, p. 262.

⁸³ Cf. the notorious misinterpretations of Othello's last great speech by T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays*, pp. 110-112, and F. R. Leavis, "Diabolic Intellect and the Noble Hero," *Scrutiny*, VI (1937-1938). For a better analysis, see Howard Baker, *Induction to Tragedy*, pp. 174-179.

here vnto the river in they valiantly a while fought & in the end accorded to parte & King do
 so they loynly gouerned till treason took away the lyfe of K^e Edmund & left & Danc^e sole Monarche.



At Tewkesburye was fought the last battell betwene King Edward .4. and K. Henry
 6. wherein prince Edward's generall was slaine, and Queene Margaret & maintayner
 of these quards taken prisoner: ther died also in this battayll Thos. E. of Devonshire, John Mar:
 Dorset, & L. Wenlake, & Edmund D. of Somerset ther taken & beheaded: This was fought. 1471.



The Battle of Tewkesbury, fought between the armies of York and Lancaster during the Wars of the Roses.
 From John Speed: *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* (1611). Reproduced by permission of the Henry
 E. Huntington Library.

Hamlet in Shammy Shoes

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OUNG Boswell, in his *London Journal* (6 April 1763), recorded a conversation with Thomas Sheridan of extraordinary interest, as it marks the first detailed statement of the theory that Hamlet was an irresolute, overthoughtful prince, shrinking from action. Boswell's exact words bear quotation:

Sheridan in his usual way railed against Mr. Garrick, and I as strenuously defended him against Tommy's attacks. He gave us, however, a most ingenious dissertation on the character of Hamlet that atoned for all his wrong-headed abuse of the great modern Roscius. He made it clear to us that Hamlet, notwithstanding of his seeming incongruities, is a perfectly consistent character. Shakespeare drew him as the portrait of a young man of a good heart and fine feelings who had led a studious contemplative life and so become delicate and irresolute. He shows him in very unfortunate circumstances, the author of which he knows he ought to punish, but wants strength of mind to execute what he thinks right and wishes to do. In this dilemma he makes Hamlet feign himself mad, as in that way he might put his uncle to death with less fear of the consequences of such an attempt. We therefore see Hamlet sometimes like a man really mad and sometimes like a man reasonable enough, though much hurt in mind. His timidity being once admitted, all the strange fluctuations which we perceive in him may be easily traced to that source. We see when the Ghost appears (which his companions had beheld without extreme terror)—we see Hamlet in all the agony of consternation. Yet we hear him uttering extravagant sallies of rash intrepidity, by which he endeavors to stir up his languid mind to a manly boldness, but in vain. For he still continues backward to revenge, hesitates about believing the Ghost to be the real spirit of his father, so much that the Ghost chides him for being tardy. When he has a fair opportunity of killing his uncle, he neglects it and says he will not take him off while at his devotions, but will wait till he is in the midst of some atrocious crime, that he may put him to death with his guilt upon his head. Now this, if really from the heart, would make Hamlet the most black, revengeful man. But it coincides better with his character to suppose him here endeavouring to make an excuse to himself for his delay. We see too that after all he agrees to go to England and actually embarks.¹

Goethe and Coleridge were at one time credited (or charged) with the first critical delineation of an intellectual and irresolute Hamlet. More recently, a shrinking Hamlet was discovered in the pages of Richardson and Mackenzie. Professor G. W. Stone, Jr., once suggested to me that many actors occupied

¹ Boswell's *London Journal* 1762-1763, ed. F. A. Pottle (New York, 1950), pp. 234-235. The early date of Sheridan's "dissertation" has already been noted; see *SQ*, II (April, 1951), 148, and *T. L. S.*, 6 April 1951, p. 214.

somewhat the same interesting critical position in the eighteenth century that the "new critics" hold today, in that their individualized interpretations of characters were watched with careful scrutiny by interested and critical audiences. In this paper, I should like to concentrate on the peculiar claims that Thomas Sheridan makes to the title of critic, to establish his record as an actor,² and (particularly) to trace his success in the rôle of Hamlet. Sheridan's stature, his unusual authority, can then be measured against the larger contribution that the theater itself made to a changing concept of Hamlet in the eighteenth century, a contribution to be distinguished from the more familiar body of literature that came from "the study"—the work of essayists, editors, and academic critics.

The eighteenth century was an age rich in editors of Shakespeare, but even richer in Shakespearian actors; and the actors who played Hamlet were in turn subject to perhaps the most critical interest that any age has shown toward the stage. Churchill was only the most formidable critic of the stage in an age that, it must be remembered, produced many more of Shakespeare's plays than we can find it easy to believe today.³ As the journals of the day contained outspoken paragraphs about the actors who played Shylock, Richard III, and Hamlet, the actors were forced to become self-critical about the rôles they played; and none was more critical than Sheridan, who brought to his acting a varied background of thought and elocutionary theory worth noting.

At the time of Boswell's report, Sheridan had been living in London about five years. (He had left Dublin when Spranger Barry opened his New Theatre in Crow Street, in 1758.) During this time, Sheridan lectured on elocution in several cities, including Edinburgh in the summer of 1761. There among his North Briton students he counted James Boswell and James Wedderburne.⁴ Boswell was often in his company because Sheridan knew Johnson, and boasted of "being his guest sometimes till two or three in the morning." Boswell's great admiration of Sheridan was tempered by disappointment when he returned to London in 1762 and discovered that "an irreconcilable difference had taken place between Johnson and Sheridan." It need be noted here only that Boswell wrote:

This rupture with Sheridan deprived Johnson of one of his most agreeable resources of amusement in his lonely evenings; for Sheridan's well-informed, animated, and bustling mind never suffered conversation to stagnate.

After their misunderstanding about the pension, Johnson frequently criticized Sheridan's acting, his lectures, and his ambitious schemes generally, but his censure was mixed with a modicum of praise, and he wished Sheridan well in his profession.⁵

² La Tourette Stockwell's *Dublin Theatres and Theatre Customs* (Kingsport, Tenn., 1938) gives an account of Sheridan as theater manager, 1745-1758, but most of the material about Sheridan as an actor in this note has been brought together here for the first time.

³ For example, "1,448 performances of twenty-seven Shakespeare plays were given at his theatre alone" during the thirty-five years of Garrick's connection with the stage. See G. W. Stone, Jr., "David Garrick's Significance in the History of Shakespearean Criticism," *PMLA*, LXV (March, 1950), 186-187.

⁴ See Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, I, 385-387; II, 159; III, 2.

⁵ See his letter to Bennet Langton, 18 Oct. 1760, *Life*, I, 358; and D. MacMillan, *Drury Lane Calendar 1747-1776* (Oxford, 1938), pp. 217, 314.

Many of Johnson's contemporaries held a higher opinion than he did of Sheridan as an actor. It is worth noting, too, that they emphasized, as Boswell did, Sheridan's *well-informed* mind. As early as 1752, Samuel Derrick observed that it was "*universally allowed*" that Sheridan "understands what he says as well as any man upon the stage,"⁶ and by 1752 many on the stage understood the whole background of their parts. About this same time, the author of the broadside, *The Contest Decided* ("addressed to Mrs. Woffington"), could list among the actress's highest claims to distinction the fact that she followed "*Sheridan's and Garrick's art*"—as though synonymous with the best acting tradition.⁷ Churchill ranked Sheridan next only to Garrick;⁸ and George Anne Bellamy thought that Sheridan was "truly capital" in "all *sententious* characters" (such as Ventidius in *All for Love*), and distinguished his "scientific talents."⁹ Davies, Garrick's biographer, noted Sheridan's eminence in his profession;¹⁰ and Francis Gentleman said of Sheridan that "no performer ever conceived his author better, or marked him more correctly."¹¹ The unanimity of opinion is striking: Sheridan was distinguished for his judgment, his learning, his "scientific talents"; and he was especially praised for his interpretation of Hamlet.

Samuel Whyte confirms what the actor has himself told us, that Hamlet was Sheridan's "favorite character."¹² By 1763, when Boswell recorded his conversation, Sheridan spoke with considerable authority about a rôle he had studied for twenty years. Year after year, his success in the rôle of Hamlet was brilliant. Writing of Sheridan's first season, 1742-1743, Robert Hitchcock says that the "young gentleman," like Garrick, "at first shone forth a finished actor, and at once attained the heights which many others spend years in labouring to gain." Sheridan's first interpretation of Hamlet gave "proofs of his uncommon talents."¹³ The next winter Sheridan made his London debut at Covent Garden; at the beginning of the following season, he went over to Drury Lane. At one theater or the other, he first played Hamlet in England.¹⁴

⁶ "Remarks upon the Tragedy of Venice Preserved," in *The Dramatic Censor* (London, 1752), p. 66.

⁷ The anonymous broadside is reprinted by Augustin Daly, *Woffington* (New York, 1892), I, 121. I have used the extra illustrated copy in the Folger Library.

⁸ *The Rosciad*, lines 987-1026, *The Poems of Charles Churchill*, ed., James Laver (London, 1933), pp. 44-45.

⁹ See her *Apology* (London, 1785), I, 153, 154, 180.

¹⁰ "Notwithstanding Mr. Garrick's great reputation for acting, some critics did not scruple to compare, nay prefer Sheridan's performance of certain capital characters, such as Macbeth and Hamlet, to the other's utmost efforts in these parts." *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick, Esq.* (London, 1780), I, 292.

¹¹ See *The Dramatic Censor* (London, 1770), II, 486. In his discussion of *Hamlet*, Gentleman praises Garrick's Hamlet as the best, but—in agreement with Churchill—adds that Sheridan "undoubtedly stands second; in the lighter scenes, he wants, 'tis true, ease and levity; but in the soliloquies, and in the third act closet scene, he is, or has been, truly excellent" (I, 34). Yet Gentleman's analysis of Hamlet's character is very uncritical, and unlike Sheridan's.

¹² *Miscellany* (Dublin, 1801), p. 45. Whyte, a Dublin printer, was Sheridan's close friend for many years.

¹³ *An Historical View of the Irish Stage* (Dublin, 1788), I, 130-131.

¹⁴ The precise record of his activity in London during this first visit I have not been able to establish. Daly writes only that he made his debut at Covent Garden, and then went over to Garrick's theater (*Woffington*, I, 58, 60). I have seen a clipping of a theater advertisement for 1744: "For the Benefit of Mr. Sheridan. At the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane, Tomorrow, being the 13th instant, will be perform'd the Tragedy of *Hamlet*. The Part of Hamlet to be perform'd by Mr.

During the winter of 1744-1745, Sheridan played Hamlet again at Smock Alley. As manager there now, he enjoyed a monopoly of the theater in Dublin. His reforms as a manager were impressive; his popularity as an actor was enormous. Evidence clearly shows that his interest in *Hamlet* went beyond the star's interest in the title-rôle:

Informed on every subject, and attentive to the minutest circumstance, no part escaped his penetrating eye. The business of the stage was reduced to a regular science, in which the most trifling parts of the great machine, equally contributed towards the movement and beauty of the whole. . . .

He constantly attended the rehearsals, and settled the business of each scene with precision. Not the most trifling incident of the night's performance was omitted at the last morning's practice.¹⁵

It was at these early rehearsals, no doubt, that Sheridan laid the foundations for his "ingenious dissertation on the character of Hamlet."

For several years, his record as an actor is incomplete. My next trace of him is in a *Dublin Gazette* announcement that he played Hamlet on 25 January 1752. The same paper during the next season announced Sheridan's production of at least fourteen Shakespearian plays, including his appearance in *Hamlet*.¹⁶

Hitchcock tells us that Sheridan left his theater in Dublin during the season of 1754-1755 to play at Covent Garden, "when he played a variety of characters with the greatest reputation," among them, Hamlet.¹⁷ Back in Dublin, Sheridan reopened the Smock Alley Theatre on 18 October 1756, and a few nights later, when he played Hamlet, he was "received by a very brilliant audience." The next year, he "came forward himself in the character of Hamlet to a very good house."¹⁸

For the season of 1757-1758, just before Barry came over to challenge Sheridan's monopoly, Hitchcock gives a list of receipts for "twenty-one of Mr. Sheridan's nights," including *Hamlet*, which was presented on 6 February and brought in £118-4-11 "Irish money."¹⁹ After this season Sheridan moved to London where, during the season of 1760-1761, he played Hamlet at Drury Lane on 27 November, 10 December, and 3 March.²⁰

Sheridan. . . ." This clipping is pasted in the *Collectanea: or, a Collection of Advertisements and Paragraphs from the Newspapers, Relating to various Subjects. Theatrical*, I, 112. The three folio volumes of clippings, collected by Daniel Lysons, are in the Folger Library. The name of the newspaper is generally identified, but not in this instance.

¹⁵ Hitchcock, I, 155, 158, 160.

¹⁶ In the extra illustrated copy of Daly's *Woffington* in the Folger Library are pasted clippings of the theater announcements of the *Dublin Gazette*, numbers 144, Tuesday, 28 December 1752, to 329, 23 October 1753. They announce Sheridan's performance in a great many other plays besides those I have taken note of here.

¹⁷ Hitchcock, I, 270-271. There is a statement in *Mr. Mathews's Gallery of Theatrical Portraits* (London, 1833), p. 45, that "Sheridan made his first appearance at Covent Garden, 1754; as Hamlet."

¹⁸ Hitchcock, I, 279, 290.

¹⁹ Other plays on the list deserve notice: 13 Feb., *Merchant of Venice*, £79-7-1; 16 Feb., *Comus*, £41-8-9; 20 Feb., *Macbeth*, £98-1-11; 27 Feb., *Richard III*, £110-19-9; 4 March, *Merchant of Venice*, £54-19-9; 6 March, *Coriolanus*, £58-7-10; 11 March, *Richard III*, £100-14-7; 13 March, *Romeo*, £57-8-4. The total for 21 nights was £1631-1-11, "on an average 77l. 17s. 2d. per night." The receipts for *Hamlet* were well above average. See Hitchcock, I, 284-285, or the Appendix of Sheridan's *An Humble Appeal to the Public* (Dublin, 1758), p. 44.

²⁰ See MacMillan, *Drury Lane Calendar*, pp. 254, 267, 280, 314.

In 1763, Barry invited Sheridan to return to Dublin "as his guest"; there, "pursuant to agreement," on 11 November, he played Hamlet "to 185*l.* 4*s.* 4*d.*" He continued playing "till March" and appeared as Hamlet again on 12 November, 12 December, and 12 January.²¹ Hitchcock supports Whyte with the statement that "early in November . . . Mr. Sheridan came forward in Hamlet, a character he had sustained with the greatest respectability, both in London and Dublin."²²

If Dibdin's dates are accurate, we next find Sheridan back in Edinburgh, where, three years earlier, he had first met Boswell. Apparently his lectures had been successful in the northern capital, for "sometime in July," 1764, Sheridan returned and

gave readings at the meeting-house in Skinner's Close, and on Wednesday, 25th July, "at the request of several persons of distinction," he performed Hamlet at the theatre.²³

In the spring of 1768, Sheridan returned to Dublin to lecture; there he also played Hamlet, and "amply experienced a continuance of public patronage and favour."²⁴

Fortunately, at least one detailed account of the way Sheridan played Hamlet survives. It is especially interesting because it reveals that the critic's opinion of the rôle was curiously like the actor's. This theater note, as far as I know, has never been reprinted before; it deserves rather extensive quotation, because this kind of commentary from the theater has not received the attention it deserves by students of Hamlet criticism.

Last night Mr. Sheridan . . . performed the part of Hamlet, at the theatre royal in the Haymarket, to a very crowded and brilliant audience.—This is a character that Mr. Sheridan has been long notorious in. . .

This tragedy, of all Shakespeare ever wrote, has been esteemed the most difficult for a player to execute, as it is more free from those rants of passion that mark his other pieces, and as every line requires sensibility and judgement in the speaking:—hence, in all the declamatory parts, with which this character abounds, we were animated and instructed by a judicious, emphatical delivery, almost unknown to the stage before; and, 'bating some natural defects of voice, which prevented Mr. Sheridan from being altogether so harmonious, his soliloquies were perfect pieces of oratory. As the character of Hamlet varies a great deal after he feigns his madness, particularly in the scene where the play is going on before the Court, the audience were in some pain for him lest he should want that vivacity which is so necessary to support the part; but here he soon relieved them, for he at once put off the solemnity of his former character, and stepped into his feigned one with a juvenility that was no less pleasing than judicious; and I must confess, I think he shewed the part, by the easiness of his transition, to more advantage than ever I remember to have seen it performed, though I have often been happy enough to be an auditor of Mr. Garrick's. In the Closet scene he again renewed his dignity, and shewed the poet to such advantage as gave the audience infinite satisfaction; nor was he less remarkable in the Grave

²¹ Whyte, *Miscellany*, pp. 77-78.

²² Hitchcock, II, 116-118.

²³ James C. Dibdin, *The Annals of the Edinburgh Stage*, p. 131.

²⁴ Hitchcock, II, 159-160.

scene, where those beautiful reflections on mortality received additional force from his judicious, graceful, and sentimental delivery.²⁵

This criticism of Sheridan's actual stage performance of the rôle is interesting for many reasons. It is consistent with all that we know about the Irish actor. It suggests that he emphasized declamation (as one would expect a lecturer on elocution to do),²⁶ that he was especially remarkable for his delivery of the soliloquies (as Francis Gentleman also declared), and that despite his "natural defects of voice"—a criticism frequently noted throughout his career—his *superior judgment and conception* of the rôle allowed him to make smooth transitions into the quite active "mad scenes" (which he played with vivacity). We wish we had more details about the Closet scene and the Grave scene, but the article clearly suggests that he played them with dignity and *sentiment*.

The emphasis of this note on *sentiment* and *sensibility* is particularly interesting; the criticism sounds much like Sheridan's own "dissertation" on Hamlet, and it marks, as far as I know, the first printed criticism of the rôle in those terms (more than ten years before Mackenzie's two famous essays). Of particular significance is the fact that this criticism, like Sheridan's remarks, comes from the theater, not the study. Apparently Sheridan was not the only man in the theater with a conception of Hamlet as a delicate, sensible Prince.²⁷

Such, in broad outline, is the record of Sheridan's interpretation of Hamlet, on the stages of Dublin, Edinburgh, and London, over a period of thirty-four years. Only one discordant note is to be found in the record: an early criticism, and brief, but possibly it holds the key to Sheridan's ingenious interpretation of Hamlet's character. The young Edmund Burke as early as 1748 observed that Sheridan

is so happy in an effeminate Carriage, and squeaking Tone of Voice, that he even *fribilizes* the most masculine characters.²⁸

²⁵ *The London Evening Post*, 8 August 1769. Copied from a clipping pasted in the *Collectanea, Theatrical*, II, fol. 2*, in the Folger Library. The name of the newspaper is identified by an abbreviation; in handwriting, below the paragraph. The same volume of the *Collectanea*, p. 6, contains an interesting account of Sheridan in the rôle of King John, from the *Post*, 14 August 1770.

²⁶ It is necessary to note here that Sheridan's emphasis on declamation (his "emphatical delivery, almost unknown to the stage before") is apparently a direct continuation of an acting tradition on the Irish stage, a tradition established by Joseph Ashbury, who was the "dominating figure of the Dublin stage" following the reopening of the theater in 1690 (Stockwell, p. 35). Hitchcock wrote that Ashbury "was esteemed not only the best actor but the best teacher in the three kingdoms" (I, 34); and Samuel Hughes said that Ashbury and his son-in-law, Thomas Elrington, established "the peculiar Dublin school of playing, noted for its clear, bold elocution, which was for a while overshadowed by Garrick's school of grimace and play of features" (*Pre-Victorian Drama in Dublin*, Dublin, 1904, p. 4). Among the actors that Ashbury and Elrington trained were Wilks, Quin, and Dennis Delane—who was popular in Hamlet's rôle just before the time of Sheridan and Garrick. I am grateful that Professor J. Isaacs did not let me underestimate this tradition, which probably deserves a detailed study.

²⁷ Much the same view of Sheridan's Hamlet is expressed in the same paper the next year, August 14, 1770. The critic says that Sheridan possesses a "superior" degree of judgment and conception, and adds, significantly, that the rôle of Hamlet *principally* consists in *declamation*. After this season, the record of Sheridan's career on the stage grows thinner, but as late as 1777, we get a glimpse of the remarkable man who still had power in his fifty-eighth year to impress his audience in the rôle of Hamlet. See Stockwell, p. 196.

²⁸ Burke's articles from *The Reformer* are reprinted by Arthur P. I. Samuels, *The Early Life Correspondence and Writings of The Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke* (Cambridge, 1923), Appendix II;

One wonders if Burke had Sheridan's interpretation of Hamlet in mind. Did Sheridan *fribilize* Hamlet? He certainly played an elocutionary Hamlet, and was noted for his "sentimental delivery" of the soliloquies. In that way he seems to have departed from the English stage tradition of the rôle.

The eighteenth-century stage tradition of Hamlet was, as far as we know, an active one. Although Dr. J. Q. Adams regretted the absence "of a stage tradition worthy of confidence,"²⁹ many critics have more confidence in the tradition and regret only that details are so few. From Burbage to Garrick, so it is generally supposed, a rather consistent acting tradition of Hamlet's rôle was handed down. According to the famous statement of John Downes in his *Roscus Anglicanus* (1708), Betterton received, more or less whole, the tradition concerning the "business" of Hamlet's part from Shakespeare's day.³⁰

Burbage's conception of the rôle, it may safely be assumed, was active and heroic (a Hamlet more like Hieronimo than Wilhelm Meister). After reviewing the tempestuous, almost violent career of Richard Burbage, G. B. Harrison made a shrewd and convincing observation—that "it is scarcely likely" that Burbage's interpretation of Hamlet's character would agree with Clutton Brock's "psychological formula," which makes Hamlet the victim of the law of "reversed action."³¹

If Downes is not mistaken, Burbage's active interpretation came down to the beginning of the eighteenth century, and the heroic Prince of 1601 still held the stage when Betterton, well over seventy years old, played Hamlet for the last time in 1709 (the year when Rowe published the first modern edition of Shakespeare's plays). Since, as Dr. McManaway argues, "the stage business and the interpretation of characters are intimately bound up in the stage version of the text,"³² there is additional reason to suppose that the Restoration Hamlet was in essence the active, Elizabethan Hamlet. The text of *Hamlet* is too long to have been acted at any ordinary performance on any stage. The problem of cutting must have been serious even to Shakespeare. The Restoration stage text that Betterton played was not mangled, but it was sharply cut. Many of the great speculative soliloquies and speeches were pared or altogether omitted. A spectator who saw a performance of this cut version, as Dr. McManaway has observed, "would never question the valor of the Prince or suspect that he was tardy in driving to his revenge."³³

Betterton was succeeded in Hamlet's rôle by Robert Wilks. Wilks's acting text was prepared with the help of John Hughes, and the so-called Hughes-Wilks text was the "essential text" of the eighteenth-century stage until 1742, the season in which Garrick and Sheridan first played Hamlet in Dublin.³⁴

see especially pp. 299-300, 319. Note also that in number nine, usually credited to Shackleton, the correspondent writes of Hamlet that he "has never yet" seen the rôle "even tolerably done."

²⁹ See the "Commentary" to his edition of *Hamlet* (New York, 1929), p. 181.

³⁰ Of the many discussions of Downes's statement, see especially Hazelton Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved* (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), p. 183; and James G. McManaway, "The Two Earliest Prompt Books of *Hamlet*," *P.B.S.A.*, XLIII (1949), pp. 288-289.

³¹ *Shakespeare and the Theatre* (London, 1927), p. 69.

³² "The Two Earliest Prompt Books of *Hamlet*," p. 289.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 290. For a detailed analysis of the changes in the Restoration text, see Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved*, pp. 176-177.

³⁴ For a detailed discussion of the Hughes-Wilks text see G. W. Stone, Jr., "Garrick's Long Lost Alteration of *Hamlet*," *PMLA*, XLIX (1934), 895-896.

Wilks restored the whole of the "Angels and Ministers of Grace defend us" speech and Hamlet's advice to the Players; Wilks also cut out the dumb show, and Fortinbras in the last scene, but in other respects followed Betterton. Thus the acting text remained much the same from the time of Betterton to Garrick and Sheridan, a text that reflected an active Prince Hamlet, not a paralyzed intellectual to be interpreted by Freudian psychology.

Our confidence in this general tradition of an active Hamlet is strengthened by the evidence of the two earliest prompt books of the play that survive. Prepared by and for the actor John Ward, about 1740, as Dr. McManaway believes, these versions are two or three hundred lines shorter than the Restoration *Hamlet*. The action of the play is even more swift, cut to the sharp lines of the most essential fable.³⁵

Wilks's *Hamlet* in London, and Ward's *Hamlet* in the provinces, then, carried on the active tradition of the rôle for almost a century and a half after Burbage. In 1742, when Garrick first played the rôle, he began with the Hughes-Wilks text, which he gradually revised.³⁶ Since Sheridan acted *Hamlet* in the same season at the same theater, and then continued to rival Garrick in the rôle for a quarter of a century, it must be supposed that Sheridan used much the same acting text. Certainly there is not even the slightest remark to be found (in the evidence I have gathered) that Sheridan's text differed from the *Hamlet* that audiences knew, and had known since "the Wars." It seems unlikely that "new" lines or "new" business would have gone unremarked when it is remembered how Garrick's later acting version was received in 1772. There is clear evidence, however, that Sheridan's *Hamlet* differed from Garrick's bustling hero to the extent that Sheridan emphasized elocution, and made much of the contemplative soliloquies. In that way only, as far as I can judge, Sheridan's interpretation suggested a less active, more meditative Prince Hamlet.

Meantime, between Garrick's and Sheridan's first essay in the rôle and the time of Boswell's first *London Journal*, most actors continued the tradition of an active Hamlet, and played the rôle with vivacity. Betterton's *Hamlet* was so violent in the first of those great "attitude scenes" that he terrified the ghost.³⁷ In March 1748, the correspondent in the ninth *Reformer* objected to the very robustness in that particular scene; he had never seen the rôle of *Hamlet* even tolerably done:

As to Quin [he added], he was in such a rage at his father's ghost, that he was more than half afraid he would have killed it, instead of filial reverence, terror at beholding the awful and beloved shade, compassion for its mortal and then wretched fate—he stamped and raved at it.³⁸

And an amusing anecdote about Holland in the same scene tells us that at "the appearance of the *Ghost*, by the usual stage trick, *Young Hamlet's* hat flew off."³⁹ The phrase "usual stage trick" suggests that it was customary to play this scene with violence.

³⁵ For detailed commentary on these texts, see J. G. McManaway, "The Two Earliest Prompt Books of *Hamlet*," pp. 311-320.

³⁶ Stone, "Garrick's Long Lost Alteration of *Hamlet*," p. 896.

³⁷ See Harold Child, "The Stage History of *Hamlet*," in J. Dover Wilson's *Hamlet* (Cambridge, 1936), p. lxxiii.

³⁸ Quoted by Samuels, *Burke*, p. 174.

³⁹ John Jackson, *The History of the Scottish Stage* (Edinburgh, 1793), p. 339.

In all this period before Garrick's retirement and Kemble's succession to his laurels, there is very little evidence, then, that anyone but Thomas Sheridan attempted to alter the tradition of a bustling, robust, heroic Hamlet; but the little evidence we find is curiously interesting because of the relation it may bear to Sheridan's conception of the rôle.

Garrick wore shoes which increased his height, buckle shoes, and, in one of the "mad scenes," his black stocking down, showing a red garter.⁴⁰ One critic objected to such "artifice and impropriety," and remarked about those who played Hamlet dressed that way:

They are afraid we should lose sight of *Hamlet's* pretended madness, if the black stocking, discovering the white one underneath, was not rolled half-way down the leg.⁴¹

Surely this criticism does not suggest that the actors credited their audience with a subtle understanding of a "complicated" Hamlet, any more than the acting texts of the age suggest Wilhelm Meister's pot-bound rose.

The first suggestion of any other interpretation of Hamlet, besides Sheridan's, concerns the Scots actor, David Ross (1728-1790). In the general bludgeoning administered in *The Rosciad*, Churchill merely taps the indolent Ross:

Ross, (a misfortune which we often meet)
Was fast asleep at dear Statira's feet;
Statira, with her hero to agree,
Stood on her feet as fast asleep as he. (629-632)

This impression of Ross's indolence is confirmed by Davies, and is repeated by Hugh Kelly in his *Thespis*, and by George Anne Bellamy. These are slight references, and have nothing to do with Ross's critical conception of Hamlet, but Professor Stone has discovered an interesting reference to Ross playing Hamlet in shammy [chamois] shoes, at Covent Garden, in 1757.⁴² The *shammy shoes* suggest, perhaps, as much as costume can, the emergence of prince pussy foot in the acting tradition of Hamlet, and it is especially important that this concept was independent of "the study."

Recent historical critics have found the origins of the "new" or "romantic" Hamlet in the years between 1770-1780; in that decade they discover the emergence of the "reader's Hamlet" as distinguished from the more direct tradition of the stage Hamlet. It is not necessary to review here the Hamlet criticism about the last quarter of the eighteenth century,⁴³ and the attempts to fix the onus upon the "Scottish—untheatrical—Richardson and Mackenzie."⁴⁴ The

⁴⁰ Child, "Stage History of *Hamlet*," pp. lxxxviii, lxxx.

⁴¹ See *The Connoisseur*, number 34, 19 September 1754, p. 203.

⁴² The Covent Garden Account Books, B. M. Add. MSS., Egerton 2270; under 14 Nov. 1757, note the purchase of "Black hose and a pair of Black shammy shoes for Hamlet @ £1/4/6, for Mr. Ross." There is a portrait of Ross, as Hamlet, by Zoffany in the Mathews collection in the Garrick Club. See *Mr. Mathews's Gallery*, pp. 26-27. I cannot discover that the picture has ever been reproduced.

⁴³ The subject has been treated by many modern scholars; see especially Augustus Ralli, *A History of Shakespearean Criticism* (London, 1932); D. Nicol Smith, *Shakespeare in the XVIII Century* (Oxford, 1928); H. S. Robinson, *English Shakespearean Criticism in the XVIII Century* (New York, 1932); and Paul S. Conklin, *A History of Hamlet Criticism 1601-1821* (New York, 1947).

⁴⁴ So E. E. Stoll, in *Art and Artifice* (Cambridge, 1938), p. 107. Conklin follows Stoll in

publication of Boswell's *London Journal* indicates that it must be to very theatrical, and Irish, Thomas Sheridan that the credit (or discredit) must go for the earliest delineation of Hamlet as a consistent, studious, irresolute Prince. It is to be noted that Sheridan's dissertation is in direct, simple relation to the acted Hamlet; the scholarly and learned Sheridan—as his contemporaries called him—was first of all a man of the theater; his concept of the rôle was as directly theatrical, no doubt, as in our day Granville-Barker's illuminating Prefaces are first of all "theatrical."

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his scorn for the "Man of Feeling" and "the Scotchman, William Richardson, a professor of humanity at Glasgow with little knowledge or appreciation of English dramatic tradition."

The Two Angry Families of Verona

J. M. NOSWORTHY



IN Porter's comedy, *The Two Angry Women of Abingdon*, Mistress Barnes rounds on Frank Goursey, her daughter's suitor but also the son of her sworn enemy, with the words:

How sir your wife? wouldst thou my daughter haue?
He rather haue her married to her graue.

Dyce, in his edition of the play, supplies the note: "A recollection, perhaps, of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, act iii. sc.5: 'I would the fool were married to her grave!'"¹ Of the later editors, W. C. Hazlitt² and Havelock Ellis³ reprint the note without acknowledgment, but C. M. Gayley⁴ attempts to define Porter's supposed debt to Shakespeare more narrowly and educes parallels with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Henry the Fourth*, besides extending those with *Romeo and Juliet*. Rather hesitantly he suggests that the conversation between Frank and Mall Barnes "at her window" may be a good-natured burlesque of the famous balcony scene, that the loves of the children of the two angry women may in fact parody the *motif* of *Romeo and Juliet*. Further, he detects a verbal parallel: "Romeo seems to be muttering in his sleep through Philip's soliloquy:—

The skie . . .
Is in three houres become an Ethiope . . .
She will not have one of those pearled starres
To blab her sable metamorphosis.⁵"

These observations are of some value since they suggest that there is a fairly close relationship between the two plays, whereas Dyce's solitary parallel, though striking enough, wears a suspicious look. The phrase "married to her grave" has a distinctly proverbial ring and might, in any case, have occurred to both dramatists independently.

It is the purpose of this paper to show that these similarities are not fortuitous, but it is first necessary to establish, as far as possible, the correct orientation. The available evidence strongly suggests that Porter's play preceded Shakespeare's, so that Porter was not, as Dyce and his successors supposed, the debtor. An allusion in Richard Harvey's *Plaine Percevall* makes it highly

¹ Percy Society Publications (London, 1841), V, 73.

² Dodsley's *Old Plays*, VII, 329, note 2.

³ *Nero and Other Plays*, p. 151.

⁴ *Representative English Comedies*, I, 533-534.

⁵ *Loc. cit.*

probable that *The Two Angry Women of Abingdon* was on the boards in or before 1590, and this early dating seems to me to be acceptable on stylistic grounds.⁶ For *Romeo and Juliet* there is no established date, but the majority of critics place it within the limits 1594-1596. Professor T. W. Baldwin argues, from somewhat dubious evidence, that the play belongs to 1591, but even that date makes it a good year later than Porter's comedy.⁷ In the present state of knowledge, then, we must conclude that *The Two Angry Women* is virtually pre-Shakespearian and that if Shakespeare echoed it it was because he had some kind of access to it. So far as we know, *The Two Angry Women* was not in print before 1599, but quartos and octavos are not the only medium of communication, and Shakespeare more than once shows familiarity with works which he could not possibly have seen in book form. That he witnessed performances of *The Two Angry Women* is highly probable, and it is not impossible that he played in it. Nor can we be sure that he did not read the play in manuscript though however reluctant we may be to base any hypothesis upon such desperate conjecture.

Anyone reasonably familiar with the two plays under discussion will have little difficulty in detecting certain broad similarities of the kind noted by Gayley. The Nurse's speeches, for instance, are eminently Porterian in tone, if not in detail, and have no obvious precedent in the work of any other early dramatist, and there seem in general to be links between the comic servants of both plays. The nature of things is unfortunately such that these impressions are seldom susceptible of cogent demonstration, though they acquire a certain limited value when a sufficient quantity of more concrete evidence can be uncovered. And *Romeo and Juliet* yields a surprisingly high number of close parallels.

(1) Marry that marry is the very theame
I came to talke of, tell me daughter Iuliet,
How stands your disposition to be Married?
(I.iii.63-65.)

In Porter's play there is precisely the same situation. Barnes, having hit upon a fitting match for his daughter, tests her reaction. There is a verbal parallel:

He call my daughter,
To see how shees disposd to marriage.⁸
(610-611)

and immediately after the same obvious pun appears:

Barnes. Were it not good, then all men would not marry,
But now they do.

Mall. Marry not at all, but it is good to marry.
(622-624)

Throughout this scene the Nurse's speeches suggest the pervasive influence of Porter, and there is one tolerable parallel when she gives Juliet her blessing:

⁶ See my "Notes on Henry Porter" in *M.L.R.*, XXXV (1940), 517-521.

⁷ William Shakspeare's *Five-Act Structure*, pp. 742 ff.

⁸ I follow the text and numeration of the Malone Society reprint of *The Two Angry Women of Abingdon*, ed., W. W. Greg.

Goe Gyrle, seeke happie nights to happy daies.
(I.iii.107)

So, at the end of *The Two Angry Women*:

Mi. Barnes. Thy mother graunts my girle, and she doth pray,
To send vnto you both a ioyfull day,

Hodge. Nay mistresse *Barnes*, I wish her better, that
those ioyfull dayes may be turned to ioyful nights.
(2959-2962)

(2) Welcome Gentlemen, I haue seene the day
That I haue worne a Visor, and could tell
A whispering tale in a faire Ladies eare:
Such as would please: 'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone.
(I.v.23-26)

Capulet's nostalgic reminiscences recall Dick Coomes's vanished mastery of a different art:

ha I haue seene the day, I could haue daunst in my fight,
one, two, three, four and fiue, on the head of him.
(2382-2383)

The formula is one which Shakespeare subsequently used in *Othello* and *King Lear*.⁹

(3) O she doth teach the Torch to burne bright:
It seemes she hangs vpon the cheeke of night,
As a rich Iewel in an Æthiops eare.
(I.v.46-48)

Philip Barnes's description of night is closer than Gayley suggests:

How like a beauteous Ladie maskt in blacke,
Lookes that same large circumference of heauen,
The skye that was so faire three houres ago,
Is in three houres become an Etheope,
And being angrie at her beauteous change,
She will not haue one of those pearled starres,
To blab her sable metamorphesie.
(2022-2028)

Juliet is, of course, a beauteous lady masked in black. Shakespeare has a similar image in Sonnet XXVII:

Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
Makes black night beauteous, and her old face new.

This, too, has the appearance of deriving from Porter. Its use of "black" and "beauteous," both found in Philip's speech, may be noted though it is not especially significant. Lyly, in *Euphues*, has "A fair pearl in a Morian's ear," which Shakespeare may have recalled, but the debt to Porter remains.

⁹ See my note on "The Shakespearian Heroic Vaunt" in *R.E.S.*, II (1951), 259-261.

- (4) He shall be endur'd.
 What goodman boy, I say he shall, go too,
 Am I the Maister here or you? go too
 Youle not endure him, God shall mend my soule,
 Youle make a Mutinie among the Guests:
 You will set cocke a hoope, youle be the man.

Go too, go too,
 You are a sawcy Boy, ist so indeed?
 This tricke may chance to scath you, I know what,
 You must contrary me, marry 'tis time.
 Well said my hearts, you are a Princox, goe,
 Be quiet, or more light, more light for shame,
 Ile make you quiet. What, chearly my hearts.

(I.v.78-90)

Goursey's remonstrations with his wife are conducted along similar lines. She has snatched the letter written to him by Barnes.

Shall I not haue it, in troth Ile trye that,
 Minion Ile hau'te, shall I not hau'te, I am loath,
 Go too, take pausment, be aduise,
 In faith I will, and stand not long vpon it,
 A woman of your yeares, I am ashamde,
 A couple of so long continuance,
 Should thus, Gods foote, I crye God hartely mercy,
 Go to, yee vexe me, and Ile vexe yee for it,
 Before I leaue yee I will make yee glad,
 To tender it on your knees, heare yee, I will I will.

(1272-1281)

In view of the lines preceding these:

(*Goursey*) Go to, I am angrie at the heart, my very heart.

Mis. Gour. Harte me no hearts, you shall not haue it sir.

(1267-1268)

Capulet's repeated "my hearts" is interesting, but its association with "cocke a hoope" is even more so since Porter affords the line:

Merrie go sorrie cocke and pye my hearts.

(862)

(5) Mercutio's comments on Tybalt's duelling methods (II.iv.19ff.) recall Coomes's contempt for "this poking fight of rapier and dagger." "Iesu a very good blade, a very tall man" may be set beside Coomes's "a man, a tall man and a good sword and buckler man." Coomes's numeration, which actually goes up to fifteen, and which has already been noted under (2) may have prompted Mercutio's

he fights as you sing pricksong, keeps time, distance, and proportion,
 he rests his minum, one, two, and the third in your bosom.

(II.iv.21-24)

The similarities in this scene are tonic rather than verbal, and Mercutio's best lines are unquestionably the heirs of Shakespeare's invention, exhibiting an ease and richness far beyond Porter's scope. The fact that Mercutio and Frank Goursey's boy both mention "the Wild-Goose chase" argues little, but when Romeo retorts:

Nay, good Goose, bite not.

we are reminded that Nicholas Proverbs's retort to Coomes, in that section of Porter's play which seems to have influenced this scene, is

Good Goose bite not.

The phrase is, of course, proverbial, but is not a Shakespearian commonplace, and its presence here, in conjunction with the other threads of evidence, is suggestive.

(6) *Aqua vitae* is the Nurse's sovereign remedy for all qualms, and she calls for it upon two occasions:

Ah, where's my man? giue me some Aqua-vitae.
(III.ii.87)

Some Aqua-vitae ho, my Lord, my Lady.
(IV.v.16)

The word is not common in Shakespeare and there may be a debt to Porter's:

Some *Aqua vitae* reason to recouer
This sicke discourser.
(1478-1479)

(7) I would the foole were married to her graue.
(III.v.141)

This has already been noted and calls for no further discussion. The Porter reference is 1627-1628. Capulet's speeches in this scene sustain the general resemblance noted under (4). His use of picturesque but coarse terms of abuse strengthens the link slightly.

(8) How now my headstrong,/ Where haue you bin gadding?
(IV.ii.16)

Capulet greets Juliet as Mistress Barnes greets Mall:

How now minion, wher haue you bin gadding?
(692)

Porter gives her a similar line a little further on:

How now sirra, where haue ye beene walking?
(726)

(9) Armes take your last embrace: And lips, O you
The doores of breath, seale with a righteous kisse
A datelesse bargaine to ingrossing death.
(V.iii.113-115)

It would be idle to suggest Shakespeare's sole claim to legal imagery, but the use of that imagery in the present context suggests recollection of the wooing-scene in *The Two Angry Women*:

(Frank) Therefore go vp my ioy, call downe my blisse,
Bid her come seale the bargaine with a kisse.

Mal. Franke, Franke, I come through dangers; death and harmes,
To make Loues patient with thy seale of armes.

(1582-1585)

Taken as a whole, and in conjunction with the general impression, these parallels suggest that Shakespeare owed something to Porter and it remains to consider whether any significance attaches to the debt. The earlier play yielded Shakespeare a proverb or two, a phrase or two and at least a couple of striking images, but these, in themselves, tell us little, and those parallels of tone and style which further the portrayal of character are far more material. It was Arthur Broke who supplied what is considerably more than an outline sketch of the "prating noorse," but in the play much is added that is of the native, homely kind which we associate with *Ralph Roister-Doister*, with *Gammer Gurton's Needle* and with Porter's comedy. Shakespeare's Mercutio, who owes little or nothing to Broke, seems to derive something from Porter, but with him, as with the Nurse, it is far easier to point to what is pervasive than to what is specific. Capulet is more decisive and his speeches, throughout the play, are very much in the manner of Porter while the debt to Broke is practically non-existent. It is not wholly unreasonable, therefore, to suppose that Shakespeare, at this early experimental stage, sought guidance from *The Two Angry Women* when the problem of portraying a harassed and testy father confronted him. Since anger and feud were leading motives in the story which he had elected to dramatize, his thoughts would naturally tend to stray back to the play in which those elements had already been treated with conspicuous success. One thing which is certain is that *Romeo and Juliet* is the work of a dramatist who has temporarily, at least, parted company with Kyd and Marlowe, neither of whom can supply his particular needs. And, rightly or wrongly, Shakespeare took realism to be his principal need, realism which so few literary works, Porter's play excepted, could supply.

This link, though plausible enough in theory, seems grotesque in practice. *Romeo and Juliet* purports to be a tragedy, whose story was extant and had been many times writ in choice Italian, and there can be no doubt about the earnestness of Shakespeare's intentions. *The Two Angry Women*, on the other hand, is based on what is, at most, a *fabliau* and, without any pretence of elegance, directs its material to farcical rather than conventionally comic ends. Yet this disparity should not blind us to two significant facts: first, that *Romeo and Juliet* has far more in common with *The Two Angry Women* than with any tragedy, or even serious comedy, of the period; second, that "a plague a'both your houses" might serve as a comment on either the tragedy or the comedy. For certain essential plot elements are practically identical. The two hours' traffic of both plays is concerned with dissension between two households both alike in dignity. And it is forth the loins of these two foes that a

pair of lovers take their life. There are parental attempts to cross true love, which culminate in the flight of the lovers. Finally the families are reconciled. The story which Shakespeare took over from Broke gives the tragic view of a subject which, in *The Two Angry Women*, is directed towards comedy, and the similarities are sufficiently obvious to justify the view that Shakespeare recognised them and allowed them to affect his presentation.

It is a curious kind of obligation, and also a detrimental one. So long as man is capable of being moved by pity or by poetry *Romeo and Juliet* will retain its appeal, yet it is never likely to be received as great tragedy, or even as good tragedy. There will always be this kind of contradiction which disinterested aesthetic criticism has to face, and it is very certain that one way of not facing up squarely to the problem is to attribute the play's failure to its lyrical tone and movement. There is no reason why a play which deals with star-crossed lovers should not, at one and the same time, be lyrical and greatly tragic.

Professor H. B. Charlton, who treats *Romeo and Juliet* as an experimental tragedy, offers several eminently sound reasons for Shakespeare's failure to achieve the full tragic function and effect.¹⁰ There is, in the first place, the fact that Romeo and Juliet remain "just a boy and a girl in a novel." Juliet, we may allow, is sufficient for Shakespeare's purpose, for comparison with the later passive heroines, Ophelia and Desdemona, is not really damaging. But Romeo lacks that maturity which is, irrespective of any of Aristotle's prescriptions, a requisite of the tragic hero. If tragedy is to present the reversal from prosperity to abject misery, it can only do so in terms of a hero whose experience of life is sufficiently rich and sufficiently profound to render the human protest at once vigorous, pitiful and terrible. Romeo, in effect, does little more than reflect Shakespeare's own bewilderment—or so one would suppose. For it is tolerably clear that the play was written long before its creator came to feel the burden of the mystery.

Romeo and Juliet are opposed by two main forces—the feud and Fate. In Broke's *Romeus and Juliet*, the feud is left undeveloped and Shakespeare, too, fails to make it a vital and effective element in the plot. A series of minor skirmishes, some of which are frankly comic in treatment, is not at all the same sort of thing as, let us say, the social conflict in what is, nevertheless, the ordered state of Rome in *Coriolanus*. Fate, Fortune or Destiny, which Broke introduces with monotonous regularity, or rather absurd persistence, is incorporated by Shakespeare in the form of omens and prognostications, but without any hint of tragic necessity. Charlton, who develops these two aspects of the play in reasonable detail, concludes with the observation that the defective sympathies of the subsidiary characters, notably Mercutio and the Nurse, confer upon the play something of the effect of tragedy—at least for a time.

It seems to me that Professor Charlton, whose analysis is principally concerned with Shakespeare's treatment of his source, has diagnosed the play's radical defects. Shakespeare's failure is due partly to his own immature response, partly to his inadequate transmutation of source material, or, in more

¹⁰ *Romeo and Juliet as an Experimental Tragedy* (British Academy Shakespeare Lecture for 1939); now incorporated in H. B. Charlton, *Shakespearean Tragedy*.


general terms, to an imperfect conception of the needs of tragedy. This imperfect conception seems to me to go hand in hand with faulty execution, and for this I would hold the impact of Porter largely responsible. In the actual execution of this tragedy, Shakespeare, it seems, submitted himself too readily to an influence whose only prompting was towards comedy, with the result that, despite Fate, the feud, the mortal duels, Romeo's banishment, the flight, sufferings, and pitiable end of the two lovers, there is remarkably little in *Romeo and Juliet* that is tragic in both tone and substance. And it is of the tonic imperfections that we are most painfully aware. The scene in which the Nurse and the Capulets lament Juliet's supposed death offers a notable conflict of incongruous styles. Mercutio makes a good end, but his dying speeches, magnificent in their exuberance, are not really fitted to the occasion. Above all, the Porterian Capulet, his lady, and the Montagues to boot, fail to maintain the feud at anything more than an everyday, domestic level. They are simply angry and funny in the Abingdon manner.

It seems clear that comic forces not quite the same as those operative in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* or *The Comedy of Errors* are at work. We accept Romeo and Juliet, despite occasional lapses, as objects of pity, but it is impossible to accept their surroundings. Even when Friar Laurence, Paris, Benvolio, and Tybalt are left out of account, there remain two Capulets, two Montagues, the Nurse, Mercutio, and a host of comic servants who are given no little prominence. There is altogether far more of the trivial and the frivolous than any tragedy can hope to carry. I have attempted to show that Shakespeare borrowed words and phrases from Porter, and that these may, with caution, be associated with elements of characterisation, yet I am inclined to regard the influence as a more general and pervasive one, and to suppose that Shakespeare, with situations parallel to those in *The Two Angry Women* to handle, was content to present these very much as Porter presents them.

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The Shakespeare Film as Record: Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree

ROBERT HAMILTON BALL

TAGE-HISTORIANS have a difficult, if happy, task, for the drama as such truly lives only while it is being performed. When a production is concluded, it can be said to exist as a man deceased remains in the partial recall of those who knew him; a remembrance of appearance and speech and action. So a theatrical performance becomes an increasingly hazy recollection in the minds of those who have seen it or participated in it; and for those who did not but wish to know what it was like, the only recourse is to the memory of others, the pictures and comments which present what actually occurred on the stage, and the theatrical jottings which helped to make the production possible, the materials in short of historical biography. Yet a play is written for the theater, and it is through what happened to it in the theater that it must be judged. It is the stage-historian's business to reconstruct so far as possible from the dark backward and abysm of time what actually did happen.

Of all the elements which go into a theatrical presentation, the most difficult to reconstruct is the contribution of the actor. Prompt-books may record adaptation and business; drawings or photographs may indicate stationary groupings and settings; there may be musical scores and light-plots; and usually of course the play is in print. All these in addition to reviews, criticisms, and reminiscences, frequently contradictory and inaccurate, help the process of defining what the audience in the theater really saw and heard. But how make the actor come alive? How show him in motion, his walk, his facial expressions, his gestures, the tone and nuances of his voice? How depict something more than the unsatisfactory frozen attitudes of still photography or artist's delineation? How instead show him in ever varying physical relationships with background, properties, and most important of all, other actors, themselves seldom still, usually inter-acting? Finally how convey that curious magnetism which makes an actor a part of a strange and welded whole, with play, performers, and audience a dynamic amalgam? We know very little about what Garrick's *Lear*, Kean's *Othello*, Booth's *Hamlet* were really like. The more closely we approach our own time of course, the more we have to go on. The comments increase; the photographs multiply; the records pile up in theater collections.

There is, however, one relatively modern source of information which

stage-historians have neglected, the motion picture. It is with that phase, specifically applied to the plays of Shakespeare, that I have been concerning myself intermittently for the last five years. There is a great deal that I do not yet know—and cannot know until I have the leisure to do research abroad. The process, moreover, is extremely slow because the investigation lies largely in materials relatively unfamiliar and difficult to locate, in forgotten lists and trade periodicals, in the minds of people who have to be traced and interviewed, in scattered storage vaults, in the films themselves. I do know however that a film of Sarah Bernhardt in the duel scene of *Hamlet* is still in existence, and I have seen films of Ruggero Ruggeri, also in *Hamlet*—only parts of it, alas!—of Frederick Warde in *King Lear*, of Rose Coghlan in *As You Like It*. And there may be extant, among others, films of Paul Mounet in *Macbeth*, of Gémier in *Timon of Athens*, of Ermete Novelli in *The Merchant of Venice* and *King Lear*, of Forbes-Robertson in *Hamlet*.¹

None of these films is of much importance in the development of cinema as a potential art form, though they have their place in its history. They were early, all of them, and hence technically crude; they were silent and can tell us nothing of the actor's voice and little of his delivery of Shakespeare's lines. They were on the whole bad films, films which did not make the proper use of the new medium because they were relatively close to photographs of stage productions. But for the stage-historian they are extremely valuable records, first because they show actors in motion, and second, because they *are* photographs of stage productions. Even when they do not exist or have not yet been discovered, they can tell us, as I shall try to show, something of the history and nature of performance.

Take for example the case of Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree. Most people have forgotten that Tree ever made a Shakespearian film—the last was in 1916. Whatever one may think of the Orson Welles *Macbeth*, currently being screened, Welles is only the last of a series of actors who have played Macbeth in moving pictures. Sir Herbert was one. His remarkable performance of Cardinal Wolsey was recorded on film. The shipwreck scene from *The Tempest* as produced at His Majesty's Theatre was photographed in motion. Strangest of all perhaps is that Tree acted in what was probably the first Shakespearian film ever to be made, and of all plays, of *King John*.

The evidence as to date is contradictory for *King John*—Tree himself was inaccurate or inaccurately quoted in much later interviews—but I plump for 1899 until I can catch and pin down the fugitive material, so far elusive. Various records place it earlier, not later, but Tree's production of *King John* at Her Majesty's opened on September 20, 1899, and it seems probable that the film would have been made when cast and costumes were already available. The souvenir program for the stage performance was "Published for Mr. Tree by the British Mutoscope and Biograph Company, Limited, who have received from him sole rights for the photographing at Her Majesty's Theatre," possibly a clue for the discovery of the motion photographer. The film was not shot in the theater, however—full sunlight would have been necessary this early—but on the Embankment by the Adelphi. In any case it was a photographic tran-

¹I prefer to deal here not with films which I have found but with those for which I am searching, partly in the hope that readers may give me clues.

script of the stage production, as Tree himself later reported in an interview, "entirely without meaning except to those who were perfectly familiar with the play and could recall the lines appropriate to the action." But the stage-historian *is* familiar with the lines and could interpret. He is aware of Tree's three-act stage adaptation, of the insertion of the granting of Magna Charta in a magnificent tableau—which because it was dumb-show might have been really caught by the camera—and with the text before him he could watch in action Tree as King John, Lewis Waller as Faulconbridge, and Julia Neilson as Constance. Cinematically the film must necessarily have been ridiculous, but as a record of at least part of the stage-production it becomes invaluable—if it still exists.

Tree himself was not filmed in *The Tempest*, which opened at His Majesty's Theatre on September 14, 1904, and ran for a hundred forty-three performances. He played Caliban, and all that was photographed was the shipwreck scene. Nor do I know precisely when this film was made—the production was several times revived—but it is listed in George Kleine's *Catalogue of Educational Motion Pictures*, copyrighted in 1910. It was but a hundred feet in length and ran therefore only a couple of minutes. The catalogue tells the story best:

This remarkable picture, taken under the ordinary conditions of stage lighting during representation, illustrates the great advances in animated photography which the motion camera has rendered possible. The shipwreck with all its intense realism is reproduced with startling detail. The lightnings flash, the billows leap and roll, and break, until on the tossing ship, where the terror-stricken voyagers can be seen wildly rushing about, the mast snaps and crashes to the deck. Three views are given in the film, each from a more distant point as the wreck recedes, and as the film is issued tinted to the suitable weird moonlight color, the effect obtained is very fine. It is also issued artistically colored, which greatly heightens the wonderful effect of what is unquestionably one of the greatest triumphs of stage production ever attempted.

That the scene was an impressive spectacle is borne out by the review in *The Era* of September 17:

In the production at His Majesty's modern science has enabled Mr. Tree to fairly stagger us by some wonderful storm effects and to produce a magnificent realization of the shipwreck that opens the play. The vessel takes up the whole of the stage. . . . Amid the shrieking of the wind and the roaring thunder we hear faintly the voices of the ship's master and the boatswain; the very timbers seem to creak; the mainmast snaps like a piece of match-wood; and the spectacle is really awesome. In the triumphs of modern stage-craft nothing quite so fine as this shipwreck has been seen, and it will be the talk of London.

The sound effects are forever stilled,² but it is worth remarking that what the reviewer describes as spectacle, the film *depicts*—or did. I should like to see the lightning flash, the billows break, the mast fall in Tree's production, "artistically colored" or not. Though presumably Viola Tree's Ariel did not

² Tree made some gramophone records but of course here there would be nothing for him to record.

flame amazement, I would cheerfully pay the \$13.00 which Kleine asked to watch the confusion of J. Fisher White as Gonzalo, S. A. Cookson as Alonzo, Lyn Harding as Antonio, W. A. Haines as the Boatswain, and Basil Gill as Ferdinand.³ The only way possible is through the film—if it still exists.

Tree's next Shakespearian film was considerably more ambitious. He had opened his elaborate production of *Henry VIII* at His Majesty's on September 1, 1910, playing Wolsey himself, and with Arthur Bouchier as the King, Violet Vanbrugh as Queen Katharine, and Laura Cowie as Anne Bullen. The presentation attracted the attention of Will Barker, a pioneer in the film business even before the turn of the century; he was chiefly known for his "topicals," forerunners of the modern newsreels, though he had also made story-pictures, including a *Hamlet*. Barker finally persuaded Tree to agree to transport the stage production of *Henry VIII* to his Ealing studio for filming. Tree was to be paid the unprecedented sum of £1000; lest the film prove unsatisfactory, deteriorate, or interfere with the ticket sales of the theater presentation, it was understood that after six weeks of exhibition the prints were to be destroyed; Barker arranged to lease rather than sell the twenty copies, ten for London, ten for the provinces.

After several arrangements for the filming had been cancelled because of bad weather and insufficient daylight, *Henry VIII* was finally photographed on February 9, 1911. The story is best told in the *Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly* of February 16—I omit some journalistic flourishes:

The Barker studios at Ealing were a veritable hive of industry from a very early hour on Thursday, and when Sir Herbert Tree, Mr. Bouchier [*sic*], Miss Violet Vanbrugh and the others arrived about 10:30, very little preparation was necessary before the filming of the subject began. [Barker explained the limits of the acting area, marked off by white tapes, in which they could work before the stationary camera; the actors, within these limits, gave their usual stage performance.] Once under way, it proceeded from 11:30 until about 3:30 in the afternoon without a hitch, a tribute to the careful rehearsals at His Majesty's Theatre. . . . Each scene was gone through once only before actually being taken, and Mr. Barker, at the camera, had the satisfaction of knowing that none of the 5,000 feet or so of the film was wasted. . . .

It was five o'clock before Mr. Barker reached Soho Square with the film. This was immediately developed and a complete print of the subject, toned throughout, was prepared and shown to Sir Herbert, Lady and Miss Viola Tree, Mr. Bouchier [*sic*] and Miss Violet Vanbrugh and other members of the cast at midnight.

Thus was *Henry VIII* recorded on film and screened within one day,—as far as the actual camera work was concerned in five hours, a feat made possible only by Barker's careful preparation. The settings were replicas of those at the theater and had been made ready in advance; the props had been transported from His Majesty's. The two hundred principals and extras were at the studio on time. However, not all of the scenes in the stage presentation

³ Or if the film is later than 1904, Holman Clark or Robert Farquharson as Antonio, and Lyn Harding as Prospero.

were used. Tree's arrangement of the play for the theater had been in three acts, divided into eleven scenes. Barker shot five scenes: the Cloisters, presenting the eremity between Buckingham and Wolsey; the Banqueting Hall, Wolsey's Palace, where Henry is smitten with the charms of Anne; Blackfriar's Hall, for the trial of Queen Katharine; an Antechamber with adjoining Chapel, depicting Wolsey's downfall; and Westminster Abbey, for the coronation. These scenes corresponded to I. i. iii; II. iv; and III. ii, iv of the adaptation for His Majesty's, and omitted I. ii (The Council Chamber), II. i (The River Gate), ii (The Gallery), iii (The Plesaunce, Windsor); III. i (also The Plesaunce), and iii (Kimbolton). Tree's adaptation had already eliminated from Shakespeare all the scenes which had to do with the intrigues against Cranmer and the christening of Elizabeth. Barker's pamphlet advertising the film was accurate enough; on the cover was the title "Scenes from Shakespeare's *King Henry VIII* As Given by Sir Herbert Tree at His Majesty's Theatre."

After an interval for private and trade exhibition, the Barker-Tree *Henry VIII* was presented to the public on Monday, February 27, in various theaters, London, suburban, and provincial; the Palace, for the West-End audiences. As befitted the occasion, special orchestras and even choruses were added attractions. Despite higher than normal prices the queues formed early, the theaters were jammed, and many were unable to obtain admission. From the exhibitors' point of view, the picture was clearly a huge success. A. E. Taylor writing from London for the American trade in the *Moving Picture World* of April 1 was only one enthusiast:⁴ "Words fail one to adequately describe this great triumph of the cinematographers' art. The picture is without doubt the greatest that has even been attempted in this country, and I am almost tempted to say in any other . . . the acting passes anything ever seen in moving pictures before. . . . The effect on the moving picture industry here will be enormous. . . ." The non-technical press, not accustomed to taking films seriously, at least praised the picture as a record of the stage performance.

Audience reaction is more difficult to gauge. That the public went to see the film is evident enough, but its response seems to have been mixed. Individuals showed enthusiasm; there was even some cheering at the conclusion. The motion picture spectator used to a different fare must have been somewhat baffled. One gentleman, evidently more accustomed to His Majesty's Theatre than to the Palace, rose in the stalls at the beginning of the performance and complained audibly, 'I say, you know, we can't hear a word!'

Tree's feelings too seem to have been divided. Motion pictures were not exactly "respectable" in 1911 and he must have received a good deal of ribbing from his friends. Low Warren says he "was never proud" of the film:

I once asked him, at the time that it was showing, how he felt when he first stood before the camera. We were seated in the Dome, his famous den at His Majesty's Theatre. His reply was typical.

"Well," said Tree with a smile, "one throws oneself into the thing as one goes into a submarine. You take a dive—a plunge as it were—into the unknown, and calmly await the result. It was a strange experience for me, I admit. I found in it a novel form of expression, and as a new sensation, I

⁴ The film, however, was not shown in the United States.

embraced it, I fell into it quickly enough. Before the film was finished I wondered if I had not deteriorated—whether, like playing the pianola, I might lose my touch. In playing before the camera I found that an entirely different method is required, as different as sculpture is from painting. Still, I was greatly interested and pleased to see the result. In fact, looking at what was on the film," said Sir Herbert laughingly, "I thought I was quite passable—thanks to the operator."

And Warren adds, in an account which it must be said is not completely accurate that Tree was "not anxious that his art should be perpetuated in celluloid," as he put it."

Certainly Tree saw no reason to alter his agreement with Barker, for at the end of the stipulated period the prints were called in, and on April 13 the press and various other visitors saw at Ealing an unusual ceremony, which I wish had never taken place. After the prints had been counted and checked, they were unwound into a loose pile on an iron sheet. Barker himself applied a match to the films; as the flames shot up everyone retired to a cooler distance and watched—all except an operator for the company who made a new film of the burning of *Henry VIII*. In a minute or two all that was left was a heap of ashes. Sir Herbert was not at the execution; it was understood that he would be given a print of the new film as a memento.

Of course the most important question is whether anything of the *Henry VIII* film survived, and here the stories, such as they are, are contradictory or inconclusive. Will Barker wrote me that he would try to answer this particular question, but died last November before he could do so. One version has it that two copies of the film were not burned, and that one went to Tree, one to Barker. Another account says all prints were destroyed, but that the negative was locked in Barker's safe. Certainly he indicated at various times that one reason for making the film was to preserve the record for posterity. On the other hand, unless it were stored properly and inspected regularly, it would long since have deteriorated beyond repair. Since, however, many films this old and much older have been preserved, I shall continue to search. The Barker-Tree *Henry VIII* is a valuable record of an important production—if it still exists.

Five years passed, and Tree was involved in another Shakespeare film project, this time with the characteristic stupendousness of California. The *Moving Picture World* of November 6, 1915, announced that the actor had been signed by Triangle on a contract which called for remuneration in excess of \$100,000 to make pictures under the supervision of David Wark Griffith. *The Tempest* was mentioned as a possible production, but three weeks later the same journal said the actor would appear as Cardinal Wolsey and probably as Bottom, and the London *Pictures and the Picturegoer* had heard that *Richard II* would be included. Evidently Griffith, who early had a literary bent and had filmed *The Taming of the Shrew* as far back as 1908, was considering the suitability of various Shakespearian plays for cinematic treatment, for this new undertaking was to be no mere transcript of a stage performance. Before Tree's arrival, however, Griffith and John Emerson, who was to write the scenario and direct the production, had decided on *Macbeth*, a choice which Tree after initial misgivings approved as "an ideal one. . . . *Macbeth*, apart from the power and

beauty of its dialogue, is a highly pictorial narrative. Its characterisations are strongly developed, and it is throughout a story of action."

Meanwhile Emerson went to work on the scenario for a picture in nine reels which was to include two hundred and fifty scenes and a thousand supernumeraries. Hector Ames in *The Motion Picture Classic* (September, 1916) quotes Emerson as having said that the plot of *Macbeth* lends itself well to the picture method of treatment:

The supernatural atmosphere . . . is very difficult to realize on the speaking stage. . . . On the screen, with the aid of the camera, the witches are easily given supernatural quality. The same applies to Banquo's ghost. . . . The visionary dagger is also an impossibility on the stage, but on the screen we can show it in a very effective and mystical sort of way. . . . When it came to preparing the screen scenario . . . the task was not so difficult as I had anticipated. In fact it was surprisingly easy, as Shakespeare's dramatic structure is more near in form to that of the film than the modern play or novel. . . . We can not only do all the scenes Shakespeare provided for us in practically the same sequence, but are able to fill in the lapses of time by adding scenes merely described in the lines of the play.

Consequently the film version was to contain Macbeth's fight with Cawdor, the latter's execution, the offstage murders, the coronation of Macbeth, and of course Birnam Wood coming to Dunsinane. Emerson, as did much later Orson Welles, conceived of the picture as set in Holinshed's eleventh century. And, as usual, there was much fanfare about historical accuracy.

The casting did not prove a difficult problem. Tree cabled Constance Collier, already in California where she had made several pictures, asking her to be his Lady Macbeth. She had long been associated with him at His Majesty's and elsewhere. Emerson engaged the rest of the cast, twelve of whom had played Shakespearian roles and all but two in *Macbeth*. Wilfred Lucas became the Macduff; Spottiswoode Aitken, Duncan; and Ralph Lewis, Banquo. Griffith personally rehearsed the cast before any film was shot. It was his Reliance group which produced the Fine Arts picture for Triangle release.

The arrival of the British actor-manager in Los Angeles must have been something to behold. Certainly Tree himself could never have expected the kind of ovation he received. Conducted from the station to the studios, he was welcomed by cowboys shooting pistols into the air, and received an official greeting from a "fair-haired little boy of five years . . . one of the most popular film actors. The infant phenomenon wore a long garment, on which was sewn in large letters the word 'Welcome,' and coming towards me with extended hand, at once put me at my ease by saying, 'Pleased to meet you, Sir Tree.'" It is Tree himself who tells the story in his *Impressions of America*, originally in the London *Times* of September 8, 1916. Tree's sense of humor must have been tickled by the boy, and he was to be good friends with the cowboys, to whom his daughter Iris says, "he repeated his most obscure epigrams."

Sir Herbert began work on January 4, 1916. He left for New York in March, to play Cardinal Wolsey at the New Amsterdam Theatre, with the picture about finished. In between many strange and wonderful things happened. Tree was considerate, willing, and assiduous but he knew nothing about film acting; his earlier Shakespearian films had been transcripts of stage productions.

Essentially he tended to do whatever he found effective in the theater. Heretofore he had used all the room on the stage he needed; he was always a mobile actor. Emerson found it almost impossible to keep him within the camera lines. Moreover he wanted to recite all the words he had been used to and could not "feel" the part if he did not. Constance Collier tells how an exasperated cameraman partially solved the problem by a dummy machine which was not loaded with film. Sir Herbert, unaware, spoke the whole text, largely unphotographed; when the unnecessary speeches were over, the real camera took pictures. Tree wanted to be in everything—everything at least in which Macbeth was. Since the scenario called for some acrobatic horseback riding, it was thought expedient to persuade him to be elsewhere while a double was substituted without his knowledge. Afterwards he was bewildered by seeing rushes of Macbeth doing things of which he had no recollection. The best story of all is also Constance Collier's and concerns the first showing of the whole picture at the private studio theater. All the important people were there, especially those who had been involved in the production; all waited eagerly to hear Tree's comments, but he said nothing during the projection. When the lights went up there were murmurs of congratulation, but Sir Herbert still remained mute. For a very good reason—he was asleep!

Macbeth was publicly shown in June in Los Angeles and New York. Tree and Miss Collier, now playing *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the New Amsterdam, attended the special *première* at the Rialto Theatre on June 4. The New York *Times* the next day called it "a fine achievement," but "not in any sense Shakespearean. To suggest for one moment that it derives to any appreciable degree from the essential beauty Shakespeare gave to 'Macbeth' is to talk nonsense of a peculiar wildness. To say, however, that 'Macbeth' should not be given on the screen is to relapse into an equal absurdity." Emerson was particularly praised for "the imagination revealed, the impressive panoramas, the fine sense of composition, the cunning uses of impressionism, the prevailing good taste. . . . The product is among the best things in motion pictures. All the detail of costuming and background is excellent, the vision of the weird sisters a triumph . . . the cave scenes are peopled with fine phantoms and the ghost of Banquo is more truly spectral than the stage can ever make him. . . . What is especially noteworthy is the suggestion of brooding night, the black, midnight quality which pervades all the picture." And elsewhere in the review, "The shade Tree is effective . . . he may be well pleased with what he saw." The trade papers, while laudatory of Tree and Miss Collier also emphasize that it was Emerson's picture. The *Moving Picture World* says "it will win on its merits."

But whatever its merits, alas, it did not. Financially the picture was a failure both here and abroad. The screen was inarticulate; the audiences lethargic. Expected to run for ten weeks at His Majesty's in London, where it opened June 22, it ran one, and was shortly released for general showing as just another film. And now the studio was in a quandary. Tree's contract was for ten months. It seemed clear that neither he nor another Shakespearean film could draw. What to do with him? The obvious move was to find some way to make him abrogate his agreement.

The rest of the story, as it is told by Rupert Hughes in the *Saturday*

Evening Post of April 6, 1935, is not a pretty one. When Sir Herbert returned to Los Angeles in July, cancellation of his contract was suggested as mutually desirable. Tree, shocked and hurt, refused. Lawyers were consulted. Could Tree be asked to play a low-comedy negro rôle in the hope that he would reject it or find it easier to depart? The lawyers thought not. "Then," says Hughes, "they cast the English knight as an American farmer in my Old Folks at Home, of all things! To their horror, he went through with it. To their greater horror he played the part magnificently." Hughes is contradicted however by the reviewer in the *Moving Picture World* of October 14. The star, he says, was Josephine Crowell; Elmer Clifton's work was commended. Tree got no notice until the last half of the last sentence, which needs no analysis: ". . . Mr. Beerbohm Tree is in the cast as the 'Senator' and does fairly well." Tree did not wait, though, for the release of the film; the handwriting on the wall was clear enough. Early in September he tore up his contract, and left for New York on his way to England.

Though the *Cinema News and Property Gazette* of London thought *Macbeth* "superb," many of Tree's friends did not. Chance Newton

denounced him "to his head" for daring to pose as Macbeth on the screen, and at His Majesty's, of all places!

"Whatever," said I, "made you do such a dreadful thing, actually presenting that great tragedy without its glorious dialogue?"

"Well, you see," replied Tree, with one of those sly chuckles of his, "I thought I had reached the time of life when I ought to be seen—and not heard!"

Tree made no more films, Shakespearian or homespun; he died the next year. Yet despite his final disappointment it must be evident that he was both a pioneer in Shakespeare films and an important part of the historical development of this genre. If I have not been concerned in this article primarily with Tree's contribution to cinema art nor with the value of his films as films—another time, another place—I am concerned here with the preservation of Tree's impersonation of *Macbeth*. Whatever the quality of the picture, it cannot but reveal much which we would otherwise forget, and far more than reviews or reminiscences. The film may not be especially significant for other reasons, but for the stage-historian it would be invaluable—if it still exists.

Lest I be suspected of pleading for the use of film as a neglected source of stage-history when the films do *not* exist, a word of explanation.⁵ Investigating the whereabouts of old films for whatever purpose is unusually difficult, complicated, and baffling. The usual methods of literary research do not suffice. Much has to be done by interviews with widely scattered individuals, by correspondence with people who too frequently prefer not to answer, by travel hither and yon to collections and archives often not catalogued, to vaults where films are not listed. Key persons, laboriously traced, inconveniently die, with their memories untapped, just before they are reached. Certain ones, still in the industry, have not the time, the patience, or the willingness to be helpful, or are tied by legal restrictions. Nevertheless clues do emerge and can be fol-

⁵ I am, obviously, interested in the history of Shakespearian films, whether I find the films or not, for other reasons as well.

lowed, sometimes to a blank wall, sometimes to yield other clues. Many people have devoted much time and effort to aid in the search. And films do get found, sometimes in the most unlikely places; an English *Taming of the Shrew* in upstate New York, a continental *Winter's Tale* in England, a *Hamlet* in Nebraska, another in Paris, a French *Macbeth* in Los Angeles. On the other hand films were projected to the point of uselessness and consequently junked, or they were destroyed by studio fires, or improperly stored until they stuck together, or decomposed for their chemicals. Nevertheless I do not yet despair of finding some of Tree's films. The *King John* is probably too much to ask for. The *Henry VIII* because of the deliberate burning of the prints may mean oblivion, but at least the search is narrowed. I still have clues to follow, too, for *The Tempest* and *Macbeth*, and kind friends may offer more. My point is that if the films turn up we shall know more about Tree as a Shakespearian actor than we do at present. And now, if I may be permitted, I shall set out again in pursuit.

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The unconventional nature of this article makes next to impossible the use of the customary footnotes except for such documentation as I have chosen rather to run into the body of the text. To be full and accurate, such notes would have to be so extensive and explanatory as to overweigh the article itself, or make it unreadable. One statement may have at its base several interviews, a mass of correspondence and jottings, programs and pamphlets and fugitive material, as well as books and articles—all frequently giving contradictory information. My aim has been to be as accurate as possible without presenting all the involved steps which led to my conclusions. Perhaps the following acknowledgements will, however, be helpful to the reader, and I stand ready to give further details to anyone who may wish them.

I am thankfully indebted for some details to the late Will Barker, to Miss Constance Collier, and to Miss Iris Tree. The basic source of information is the trade journals: in England, especially *The Kinematograph Weekly* (under its various titles) and *The Cinema News and Property Gazette*; in the United States, particularly the *Moving Picture World*; the references are usually but not always of appropriate date. Published interviews with Tree by Helen Duey ("Shakespeare in the Films," *Woman's Home Companion*, June, 1916) and with Barker by Charles Graves ("When British Films Had to Pay," *Everybody's*, December 24, 1949) have been helpful. The Kleine catalogue is in the Museum of Modern Art, New York. There is no satisfactory biography of Tree; Max Beerbohm edited *Herbert Beerbohm Tree* by various hands (London, n.d.). For further details about Tree, especially in California, see also Constance Collier: *Harlequinade* (London, 1939); De Wolf Hopper and W. W. Stout: *Once a Clown . . .* (Boston, 1927); Otis Skinner, "The Motion Picture Not an Art," (*Ladies' Home Journal*, May, 1922). Comments by Low Warren and H. Chance Newton are taken respectively from *The Film Game* (London, 1937), and *Cues and Curtain Calls* (London, 1927).

Nature's Moulds

T. W. BALDWIN

PASSAGES in *King Lear* and *Macbeth* have recently been given the greatest importance in the interpretation of those plays and in a consequent understanding of Shakspeare.¹ But those passages do not stand alone, and a knowledge of their genetics has considerable bearing on their possible interpretation. These passages concern Nature's moulds, a frequently used figure in Shakspeare—and elsewhere.

For instance, Venus says to Adonis (1593)

Now of this dark night I perceive the reason:
Cynthia for shame obscures her silver shine,
Till forging Nature be condemn'd of treason,
For stealing moulds from heaven that were divine;
Wherein she framed thee in high heaven's despite
To shame the sun by day and her by night (727-732).

This statement in *Venus and Adonis* about "stealing moulds from heaven that were divine" is probably an allusion to the ideal forms in heaven hypothecated by Plato—to turn doubly topsy-turvy everything on earth! This Platonic tit-bit was, of course, commonplace information in Shakspeare's day. Adonis would thus be moulded by Nature from an "ideal" directly from heaven, not from a mere reflected copy on earth.

But elsewhere in Shakspeare these moulds are of the earth earthy, even though beautified under the form of a figure.

These eyes, these brows, were moulded out of his.
King John II. i. 100.

That self mould, that fashion'd thee
Made him a man.
Richard II I. ii. 23-24.

Whose arms were moulded in their mothers' womb
To chase these pagans.
1 Henry IV I. i. 23-24.

Where, by the loss of maidenhead,
A babe is moulded.
Pericles III, Gower 10-11.

¹ See, among others, George W. Williams, "The Poetry of the Storm in *King Lear*," *SQ*, II, 57 ff., and the instances cited there.

The honour'd mould
Wherein this trunk was framed.

Coriolanus V. iii. 22-23.

Great nature, like his ancestry,
Moulded the stuff so fair.

Cymbeline V. iv. 48-49.

Although the print be little, the whole matter
And copy of the father, eye, nose, lip,
The trick of's frown, his forehead, nay, the valley,
The pretty dimples of his chin and cheek,
His smiles,
The very mould and frame of hand, nail, finger:
And thou, good goddess Nature, which has made it
So like to him that got it, if thou hast
The ordering of the mind too, 'mongst all colours
No yellow in't, lest she suspect, as he does,
Her children not her husband's.

Winter's Tale II. iii. 98-108.

"Great creating Nature" (*Natura naturans*) moulds the child within the mould of the mother's womb from the seed of the father into a little mould of both father and mother.

This figure of Nature's moulds Shakspeare in *Lear* III. ii. 6-9 sets within a more complicated figure of a storm. Lear prays

And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!

Here the thunder is to smite the world,² and to crack Nature's moulds (mentioned in *Venus and Adonis*), consequently spilling the germens of man. Thus Lear prays that the human race (perhaps only the ingrateful) may be destroyed.

This figure thus developed in *Lear* is alluded to in *Macbeth* IV. i. 58-61. There the wind is to rock the world, and by consequence of this rocking

the treasure
Of nature's germens tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken[s].

In this instance, Nature's moulds are not cracked, and the storm merely rocks the world, including Nature's consequently tumbled germens, till Destruction itself becomes sick—sea-sick, I suppose!

Finally, in *Winter's Tale* IV. iv. 487-489

² By "thick rotundity" Shakspeare probably indicates that he thinks of the World as pregnant, as is the Earth in the restatement of the figure in *Winter's Tale*. The thunder would thus cause miscarriage, and reduce the rotundity of the World back to its ordinary flatness, not make a literal-minded pancake of it, as apparently some "image" it. One should remember that the earth had but recently become a sphere, and was still, as it were, pretty generally flat on top. Incidentally, when a Shaksperian mountain of hyperbole is reduced to a plain of sense, a very queer mouse is not infrequently the result. If Shakspeare had wanted it to be plain sense, he would doubtless have made it so in the first place.

and then
Let nature crush the sides o' the earth together
And mar the seeds within!³

Now the storm has dropped completely from the background. The Earth itself becomes the mould and is crushed as is the World in *Lear*, but not in *Macbeth*, and in consequence the seeds of all things, not merely the seeds or germens of ingrateful man are marred, as the germens of man are to be spilled in *Lear*, and all germens are to be tumbled in *Macbeth*. Incidentally, it should not be necessary to point out that to Shakspeare germens are merely seeds, perhaps already sprouted.⁴

The figure is developed fully within a causative setting in *Lear*; both figure and setting are alluded to in *Macbeth*, but with different application; the figure itself is repeated completely in *Winter's Tale*, again with adapted application, but also as completely without its original causative setting, for now Nature itself, not the thunder, is to crush the pregnant or "pregnable" Earth. Clearly, the order of discussion above is the actual order of composition for these passages, as, I believe, scholars already agree.

The figure in *Lear* and *Winter's Tale* envisions the return of the universe to original chaos, as it was before Love (against which in the person of their father Lear's daughters had sinned) produced order, as in Hesiod-Plato-Ovid.⁵ Ovid says

Vnus erat toto naturae uultus in orbe,
Quem dixere Chaos, rudis, indigestaque moles,
Nec quicquam, nisi pondus iners, congestaque eodem,
Non bene iunctarum discordia semina rerum.⁶

Here are the "seeds of things," *semina rerum*, before Love has brought order. As Golding translates,

In all the worlde one onely face of nature did abide,
Which *Chaos* hight, a huge rude heape, and nothing else but even
A heaue lump and clottred clod of seedes together driven
Of things at strife among themselves for want of order due.⁷

This is the condition envisioned for the tumbled germens in *Macbeth*. Raphael Regius explains that the *semina rerum*, seeds of things, are the four elements, as Lucretius says. Consequently a modern translation of Ovid's passage runs thus: "the face of Nature showed alike in her whole round, which state have men called chaos: a rough, unordered mass of things, nothing at all save lifeless bulk and warring seeds of ill-matched elements heaped in one."⁸ The *semina rerum* have in this modern translation become "elements."

Scholars are well enough aware by this time that Shakspeare knew thoroughly this opening passage in Ovid as interpreted in his time. But there is

³ See T. W. Baldwin, *Small Latine*, II, 657. The statement is exactly equivalent to Othello's "Chaos is come again" (*Othello* III. iii. 92).

⁴ See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, IX, 280.

⁵ See T. W. Baldwin, *Small Latine*, II, 650 ff.; *Genetics*, 49 ff.

⁶ *Metamorphoses* (1574), p. 2 (I, 6-9).

⁷ W. H. D. Rouse, *Shakespeare's Ovid*, p. 21.

⁸ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I, 6-9 (Loeb ed., I, 3, Miller's tr.).

nothing in the *Lear* passage to indicate that Shakspeare is there using as a rhetorical pattern the four elements. Lear says

Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness (III. ii. 15-16).

Here are four elements but not "the" four elements; earth is missing from the pattern, even when we have accepted rain for water and wind for air. These two lines are a recapitulation of Lear's previous speech, in which he had invited these same four elements, not "the" four elements, to do their worst to the world, but Lear himself does not accuse these elements of unkindness; they are not his daughters. Again, it must be repeated; the shaping pattern here is not that of "the" four elements. As a matter of fact, it is Juvenal's thunder which is the dominant here; the rain, wind, and lightning are merely its tempestuous concomitants.⁹ Since Lear's conscience is clear, he neither accuses nor fears these elements, even though they are in fact acting as "servile ministers" aiding his daughters. As in the biblical account, Lear can hearken to the "still small voice" in the storm.

Perhaps we should improve the occasion by emphasizing here the fact that if we are to understand any Elizabethan, it is of basic importance for us to distinguish such patterns, whether rhetorical, philosophical, or what not. Because of the primary theory of imitation, which resulted in algebraic substitution in pattern, it is literally true that without a pattern was nothing made. And in literature, by common consent, William Shakspeare was the most successful pattern-tracer of his time. But the patterns cannot be pulled from our hats; they must be patiently traced from the works of the Elizabethans.

But to return to Nature's moulds, two other passages in Shakspeare are fundamentally dependent upon this figure. Warwick tells King Henry IV that

There is a history in all men's lives,
Figuring the nature of the times deceased;
The which observed, a man may prophesy,
With a near aim, of the main chance of things
As yet not come to life, which in their seeds
And weak beginnings lie intreaured.
Such things become the hatch and brood of time;
And by the necessary form of this
King Richard might create a perfect guess
That great Northumberland, then false to him,
Would of that seed grow to a greater falseness;
Which should not find a ground to root upon,
Unless on you. (2 *Henry IV* III. i. 80-92)

Time hatches the seed, and from similar seed will come similar progeny, so that by identifying the seed one may prophesy the resultant progeny of Time.

In *Macbeth* (I. iii. 58-59), these seeds of Time again play their part, not in a full-fledged exposition of the figure, but by allusion to it, thus presumably, and, as scholars generally agree, actually at a later time.

If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not.

⁹ T. W. Baldwin, *Small Latine*, I, 531 ff.

The witches may be able to look into the seeds of Time and tell what in time those seeds will become, so that in that way they can call Macbeth King and Banquo a begetter of kings. As pointed out in 2 *Henry IV*, any judicious person could to the extent of his ability do the same. No hypothetical power is in this passage attributed to the witches save that of inspection and consequent interpretation, though it was believed that they might be able to manipulate the growth of these seeds of Time.

For instance, as *Batman vppon Bartholome* (1582, f. 11^v) stood ready to tell Shakspeare and his contemporaries, "Also y^e fiends as *Austen* saith, by sharpnesse of witte know vertues semiall of things, that we knowe not. The which seedes they sowe by conuenable and temperate commixtions of Elements, and so they bring forth things of diuerse kinde. For what that kinde may do by it selfe in due time, the same the diuell may do sodeinly by swift hasting of the worke of kinde. So by craft of fiends *Pharaos* witches made sodeinly serpents and frogs, as sayth the Glose, *super Exod.*" This is official; "the Glose" cannot be wrong! So the witches had no power to create; but they could recognize, as in *Macbeth*, and accelerate such seeds of Time as suited their purposes.

Incidentally, Macbeth himself is caused to sum the case in its proper place at the end of the first act and then to confide to the audience that nevertheless, in full knowledge of the threatened consequences, he intends to foster these seeds of Time into full growth.¹⁰ The seeds of Time are already within him—in Banquo also; witches, wife, etc., can only help or hinder. If any member of the audience did not recognize what seeds of Time were awork in Macbeth, and what the resultant progeny must be, then that individual had not been properly trained in his catechisms, homilies, etc. It was the official doctrine of the day.

Here is one of the more important pieces of machinery in Shakspeare's thinking factory. As usual, it was there from his earliest days as a writer. The evolving difference is not in the machinery but in the intelligence with which it is used. But the machinery itself gives us the basic and reasonably objective facts concerning Nature's moulds in Shakspeare, deflated of mystical mysteries¹¹ and the tempestuous tumidities of subjective apocalyptic-interpretation. If any interpreter feels daimonically compelled to gird his fireworks round him and soar into the wild blue yonder to become one of "God's spies," he must not expect the scholar to be his pilot. He must leave the baggage-scholar here on earth, dully plodding on—and a good riddance maybe!

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¹⁰ See T. W. Baldwin, *William Shakspeare's Petty School*, pp. 175-178.

¹¹ When Gloucester says of Lear, "He hope the heavens to rain," (III. vii. 62; *SQ*, II, 66), he merely says in the rhetorical lingo of the day that Lear shed tears, wept in his beard, cried, bawled, howled, sniffled—or how do you say it?



Lancastrian Kings of England. From John Speed: *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* (1611). Reproduced by permission of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

Othello's Racial Identity

PHILIP BUTCHER



QUESTION has been raised," wrote Joseph Hunter in *New Illustrations of Shakespeare*, published in 1845, "as to what race Shakespeare intended we should suppose Othello to belong."¹ The point had been raised long before Hunter's time and discussion of it still rages. Modern scholars and critics tend to support the view that Shakespeare's references to his great tragic character as "black" and "thick-lipped" are to be taken literally, but as late as 1941 a major Shakespearian authority asserted bluntly that Othello "is a Moorish noble of royal lineage. . . . Shakespeare conceives him as an oriental."²

Shakespeare's designation of his character as a Moor provides no simple solution to the problem, for it appears that neither he nor other Elizabethans made careful distinctions between Moors and Negroes. The Moors entered Spain in force from Morocco in 711 and ruled that land as far north as the foot of the Pyrenees, practically without interruption, for more than five centuries. Negro mercenaries were among the invader's troops. The Spaniard applied the term Moor to Arabs, Berbers, Syrians, and Negroes without regard for their wide racial differences. This practice passed into other countries, and Elizabethans even taunted the Spaniards by classing them as Moors.³

On the other hand, the playwright's description of Othello as black cannot be accepted without examination. The designation is sometimes used in Elizabethan drama to refer to characters who are villainous in deed or merely brunette in complexion. Yet it does not necessarily follow that Shakespeare employs the word loosely in applying it, or its equivalents, to Othello.

There are few passages in the play which describe Othello's physical appearance, but they are consistent. Roderigo alludes to him as "the thick-lips" (I. i. 66). Iago speaks of him as "an old black ram" (I. i. 88). Brabantio refers to Othello's "sooty bosom" (I. ii. 70). The Duke of Venice consoles Brabantio:

If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.
(I. iii. 290-291)

Speaking to Othello's friend, Cassio, Iago calls the Moor "black Othello" (II. iii. 33). After Iago has planted the seeds of jealousy and Othello is considering

¹ (London: J. B. Nichols and Son), II, 280.

² George Lyman Kittredge, ed., *The Tragedy of Othello: The Moor of Venice* (Boston: Ginn and Co.), p. xi.

³ Lillian Winstanley, "Othello" *As the Tragedy of Italy* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., 1924), p. 63, and Hennig Cohen, "Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, II (January, 1951), 79.

possible reasons for Desdemona's suspected infidelity, he says, "I am black" (III. iii. 263). Later he remarks of Desdemona:

Her name, that was as fresh
As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black
As mine own face. (III. iii. 384-386)

When Othello tells Emilia that he has slain his wife, she says, "O more the angel she, and you the blacker devil" (V. ii. 130-131). It is important to note that while Othello is never called a Negro or blackamoor, Shakespeare never describes him as swarthy or tawny.

Many other passages which do not describe Othello's appearance are of value in suggesting his racial identity. Iago speaks of him as "the devil" (I. i. 91), which accords with an Elizabethan superstition that devils and evil spirits sometimes took the form of Moors and Negroes. Iago calls Othello "a Barbary horse" (I. i. 112), indicating that he was originally from northern Africa. He later refers to him as "a lascivious Moor" (I. i. 127), which is in agreement with the Elizabethan belief that lasciviousness was a characteristic of people born in hot countries. The Elizabethan idea that Moors were adept at witchcraft is reflected in Brabantio's conviction that Othello used charms to secure Desdemona's love (I. ii. 63-79; I. iii. 60-64). Only thus can he understand how she could "fall in love with what she fear'd to look on" (I. iii. 98). He insists that her love is "Against all rules of nature" (I. iii. 101), and again charges Othello with having overcome her with charms (I. iii. 103-106).

Brabantio's attitude toward the marriage is entirely unreasonable if Shakespeare conceives of Othello as swarthy or light brown. Apparently Brabantio has been Othello's friend and admirer (I. iii. 128-145). But when he learns that Othello has married his daughter, the distracted father tells Roderigo, whom he had rejected as a suitor, that he wishes he instead of Othello had won Desdemona (I. i. 176). When he finds that he cannot prevent the marriage, Brabantio tells his distinguished son-in-law:

I here do give thee that with all my heart
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart
I would keep from thee. (I. iii. 193-195)

He makes a contemptuous reference to Othello's past when he says that if he is allowed to go unpunished "Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be" (I. ii. 99). Brabantio is not merely annoyed because his consent was not asked. Only a black Othello can serve as adequate motivation for his attitude toward his daughter's marriage to a man of exalted rank and reputation.

Brabantio is not the only one outraged by the alliance. Iago speaks of it as "a frail vow between an erring barbarian and a super-subtle Venetian" (I. iii. 361-363). In answer to Roderigo's statement that the girl is of a blessed character, Iago says, "if she had been blessed, she would never have loved the Moor" (II. i. 257-259). Suggesting that Desdemona is unfaithful, Iago tells Othello:

Not to affect many proposed matches
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree,
Whereto we see in all things nature tends—

Foh! one may smell in such a will most rank,
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.

(III. iii. 229-233)

Othello, too, recognizes that the marriage is unusual. He rationalizes:

Nor from my own weak merits will I draw
The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt;
For she had eyes, and chose me.

(III. iii. 187-189)

Iago's remark that Othello plans to go to Mauritania (IV. iii. 229) has been taken by some scholars to mean that Othello was from Mauritania, a region of northern Africa corresponding to modern Morocco and Algeria, which was supposed to be the land of the Moors, and has been cited as evidence that he was a swarthy Moor and not a Negro. This conclusion is not valid, although Iago's reference to Othello as "a Barbary horse" supports the view that he was from northern Africa. In an early quarto and the First Folio, the Prince of Morocco in *The Merchant of Venice* is described as "a tawny Moore" in a stage direction. It is clear that he is darker than Portia, but there is no indication that had he succeeded in winning her the marriage would have been regarded with the same distaste as that of Othello and Desdemona. Sycorax, in *The Tempest*, was born in Algeria (I. ii. 260-261), but is never called black or a Moor. It is apparent that Othello's African birth does not establish his race or color.⁴

Nor can Othello's royal birth be used as evidence that Shakespeare could not have thought of him as really black. It is true that Negroes, and many Moors, were enslaved in Elizabethan days, but a king does not lose his royal lineage simply because he and his people happen to be slaves. When Othello says, "I fetch my life and being from men of royal seige" (I. i. 22-23), it does not mean that he therefore cannot be black. It is likely that Shakespeare made Othello a nobleman merely to suit the convention that considered people of noble blood the only proper heroes for the stage or to eliminate disparity of rank as a contributing factor in the tragedy.

In one other play Shakespeare makes important use of a character whom he calls a Moor. Aaron, a Moor, is a major figure in *Titus Andronicus*. The lover of lustful Tamora, a former queen of the Goths who becomes the wife of the emperor of Rome, Aaron incites Tamora's vicious sons to rape Lavinia, the daughter of Titus Andronicus, and then to cut off her hands and cut out her tongue. When Tamora bears a black child, Aaron refuses her demand that he kill it, and he and the baby flee the emperor's wrath.

Like Othello, Aaron is described as black (III. i. 206; III. ii. 266-267; V. i. 122). He speaks of his "woolly hair" (II. iii. 34). He is also called "swarthy" (II. iii. 72), "raven-colour'd" (II. iii. 83), "coal-black" (III. ii. 78), and a "devil" (V. ii. 90). Aaron's child is referred to as a blackamoore in a stage direction (IV. ii), and the nurse says of the infant:

⁴ Fernand Baldensperger's "Was Othello an Ethiopian?" *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, XX (1938), 3-14, refers to Othello as an Ethiopian but does not establish him as such. The term is used loosely, as are "black," "swarthy," and "negro."

A joyless, dismal, black, and sorrowful issue:
Here is the babe, as loathsome as a toad.

(IV. ii. 66-67)

Elsewhere it is called "black" (IV. ii. 120), "thick-lipp'd" (IV. ii. 175) and "tawny" (V. i. 27). As a father, Aaron rises to an unexpected nobility. He asks, "is black so base a hue?" (IV. ii. 71) and refuses to kill the child even though that refusal imperils his own life. When he is captured by the Romans, Aaron will not confess until he is assured that his child's life will be spared (V. i. 49-86). Though he is a black man, Aaron, like Othello, is always called a Moor. Only once does Shakespeare use the word Negro. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Lorenzo says to the clown: "I shall answer that better to the commonwealth than you can the getting up of the negro's belly: the Moor is with child by you, Launcelot" (III. v. 40-43). It is significant that here the term is synonymous with Moor.

There is a reference in *The Tempest* to the marriage of the daughter of the King of Naples to the King of Tunis, and it is called "a sweet marriage" (II. i. 72). It is reasonable to suppose that the King of Tunis would be somewhat darker than his bride, yet this marriage is considered fitting while Othello's is not. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, Cleopatra is mentioned as "tawny" (I. i. 6), but the only other comment on her complexion is Antony's allusion to her "white hand" (III. xiii. 138). "Tawny" is used in reference to Spain in *Love's Labour's Lost* (I. i. 171), and is coupled with Tartar in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* (III. ii. 263). In the latter play the Indian boy who has become Titania's delight is not described as black. The sweaty, grimy kitchen wench of *The Comedy of Errors* is called "swart" (III. ii. 105). The Ethiopian is mentioned as "swarthy" in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (II. iv. 26), but is pictured as "black" in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (II. ii. 20).

It appears that it was Shakespeare's practice to employ the descriptive adjective which was most nearly accurate to his conception of the physical appearance of the various races and nationalities, and that his conception was not unlike our own. His frequent use of "Moor" as the equivalent of "Negro" accords with the practice of his time and of his fellow dramatists.⁵ "To Shakespeare . . . a Moor was a negro; . . ."⁶ In any case, a Moor whom he describes as black was a Negro. Henry Peacham's drawing of a scene from *Titus Andronicus*, evidently made in 1595, shows Aaron as coal-black and leaves little room for doubt that the character was portrayed as such on the Elizabethan stage.⁷ So, certainly, was Othello.

The Elizabethans held no high opinion of foreigners and seem to have had a particular aversion for the peoples they classed as Moors. The theory of the humors, the basis of Elizabethan psychology, maintained that men were of different complexions, statures, and countenances of mind and body according to

⁵ See, for example, *Lust's Dominion* (c. 1600, author unknown) and Beaumont and Massinger's *The Knight of Malta*. The Moors in these plays are black—and stereotyped.

⁶ Theodore Spencer, in his notes printed on the record album of "Othello," Columbia Masterworks Set M-MM-554, Vol. I.

⁷ See E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), Vol. I, p. 313 and plate xi; and J. Dover Wilson, "Titus Andronicus on the Stage," *Shakespeare Survey* 1 (1948), pp. 17-22, and plate I, facing p. 32.

the climate of the country of their birth. This theory conveniently reserved most of the virtues for the people of the North and characterized those of the South as jealous, superstitious, cowardly, lascivious, cruel, and inhuman,⁸ and it made Shakespeare's choice of Othello as the victim of jealousy especially convincing for his audience.⁹ Otherwise, however, Othello is a departure from the stereotype. It has been suggested that Shakespeare may have been familiar with Leo Africanus' *A Geographical Historie of Africa* in John Pory's translation, and may have accepted his interpretation of the character of "white or tawnie Moores, and Negroes or blacke Moores" and used Leo's life as a model for Othello's youthful exploits and mature achievements.¹⁰ Whether Shakespeare read the book or not, other Elizabethans did, but it did not affect the stereotyped portrayal of Moors on the stage, and no other playwright culled from its pages the material with which to create a great tragic figure. In his effective use of the many contrasts between Othello and Desdemona in age, character, background, and appearance—contrasts later audiences as well as the Elizabethans have found provocative and exciting—Shakespeare demonstrates his talent for good theater. But in making Othello undeniably black and in giving this black man heroic stature quite in disagreement with the literary and social practice of his time, in making him profoundly human in his strengths and weaknesses, Shakespeare reveals both the quality and extent of his genius.

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⁸ Ruth Leila Anderson, *Elizabethan Psychology and Shakespeare's Plays*, Humanistic Studies, Vol. III, No. 4 (Iowa City: The University of Iowa, 1927), p. 50.

⁹ It may be argued that Othello was not especially prone to jealousy and that any man would have been convinced by Iago's trickery. See Richard Flatter, *The Moor of Venice* (London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1950), pp. 127, 131-132, and 138.

¹⁰ Lois Whitney, "Did Shakespeare Know Leo Africanus?" *PMLA*, XXXVII (September, 1922), 470-483. In stating that "Shakespeare was describing neither a Moor nor a negro in our modern conception of the terms but a confusion of the two types" the author fails to recognize that her own evidence, if accepted, supports the view that Shakespeare thought of Othello as a Negro.



Yorkist Kings of England, and Princess Elizabeth, whose Marriage to Henry VII joined the White and Red Roses. From John Speed: *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* (1611). Reproduced by permission of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

"Food for Powder"—"Food for Worms"

W. GORDON ZEEVELD

IN an age accustomed to blood and thunder on and off the stage, Shakespeare's instinctive revulsion from the senseless shedding of blood is striking and novel. The agonizing cry of Marlowe's Faustus at the moment of his damnation, "See, see where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!" impresses one finally with its theatricality rather than with its sensitivity to blood-letting. But Shakespeare's Portia, in a similar vein of melodrama, sets the countercurrent to the age's insensibility in her warning against the shedding of "one drop of Christian blood" (IV. i. 310). From the very beginning of Shakespeare's career, this phrase, "the effusion of Christian blood," runs like a thread through the English history plays, in which, over a long period of time, he turned again and again to the tragical cost of war. In *Henry VI*, his earliest history, the good Duke of Gloucester proposes a peace between England and France "as the only means to stop effusion of our Christian blood" (1 *Henry VI* V. i. 8-9), and in *Henry V*, with which he completed the series, the French King echoes the same sentiment (III. vi. 139-140). Indeed, the business of blood does not come to a climax until the almost unendurable pageant of Macbeth's futile and bloody murders.

In none of Shakespeare's historical plays is this humane temper more in evidence than in *1 Henry IV*, where it is thrown into high light through the deft use of a potent image. In the last decade the study of Shakespeare's imagery has been the occasion for a good deal of speculation on Shakespeare's life, character, and environment, extending from his observation of the direction of flow of the water under Clopton bridge to his disgust of the fawning spaniels at rich men's tables. As to the dubiousness of these speculations, nothing more need be said here than has already been said in Rosemund Tuve's recently published *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*. It is rather to be remarked that, with all this new interest in the subject, so little attention should have been paid to what on its face would seem to be a more pertinent field of inquiry, Shakespeare's use of imagery in conformity to the special capacities of the artistic medium in which he was writing. The prefaces of Granville-Barker have shown how sensitive Shakespeare was to the dramatic effects possible on the stage on which his plays were produced. It is inconceivable that the poet should not have perceived the possibilities of poetic imagery so projected. That Shakespeare did think of imagery functionally is a wholly reasonable hypothesis against which the evidence in *1 Henry IV* may be tested with profit.

But first the critics must be dealt with, who, while they will begrudgingly

admit that Shakespeare made a dramatic statement in *1 Henry IV*, refuse with a kind of party zeal to consider it outside of the framework of Parts 1 and 2 taken together. To that extraordinary crusader, Mr. J. Dover Wilson, those who call the two parts separate plays are "absurd," and he speaks in carefully phrased language of "this great twin-play," "this enormous twin-drama." *1 Henry IV* and *2 Henry IV* have thus been reconstructed in a special Siamese act of creation. Let no man put asunder what J. Dover Wilson has joined together. The spirit is catching, and one finds such a balanced critic as E. M. W. Tillyard accepting this view as a part of his larger picture of the continuity of the entire series of Shakespeare's English historical plays. That this continuity exists will be obvious to the most casual reader. The links are specific and fully justify Professor Tillyard's position that, taken as a whole, the English historical plays illustrate the identical lesson that Tudor historians found in fifteenth-century history, the tragic national consequences of civil dissension. In fact, one may reach beyond the historical plays entirely and see the same general theme in Shakespeare's mind as he wrote *Romeo and Juliet*. All that is necessary is to substitute Lancaster and York for Capulet and Montague. For the Elizabethan playgoer, such an interpretation would be psychologically inevitable.

In spite of the validity of these observations, there is nevertheless a demonstrable danger that a too exclusive absorption in the general theme will obscure or exclude specific themes in each of the plays of the series. Such distortion becomes untenable when one takes into account merely practical conditions of production. Is one to infer that the groundlings would stand in the yard of the Globe Playhouse for twice the two-hours' traffic of a normal play? That would be a feat which would tax the staying power of daylight as well as the leg-muscles of the standees. And if one considers that the links between *2 Henry IV* and *Henry V* are quite as apparent as those between the two parts of *Henry IV*, one must freely acknowledge the general theme and at the same time suppose that the groundling must have his money's worth at the end of two hours. And this I believe he had. *1 Henry IV*, as a performance at the Globe, must be considered a single, self-sufficient play. The action of *Part 1* is carefully contrived to give satisfaction at the battle of Shrewsbury, and if Shakespeare had retired to Stratford after writing it, I doubt whether the critics would have thought of it as a play of maimed rites.

Even considering *Part 1* within the morality context to which Wilson's argument for a unity of both parts would persuade us, one finds the result out of focus of the central emphases of the play. Falstaff makes an engaging primrose-path Mephistopheles, and the King and the Chief Justice sufficiently unpleasant prompters to virtue. But in this pattern, what becomes of Hotspur, whose dramatic importance equals or exceeds any of these? Tillyard believes that Hotspur and Falstaff stand for "the excess and defect of the military spirit, for honour exaggerated and dishonour." The historic Falstaff might deserve this opprobrious description but it can hardly characterize the Falstaff of the honor speech, in which by implication he undermines Hotspur's conventional code of honor in a medieval dialectic over him that died o' Wednesday. Whatever one's opinion of that incorrigible reprobate, few would maintain that either he or his creator is naive. And by what convention of the morality tradition can Shakespeare have been abiding when he made his Everyman, Hal,

announce at the very beginning of the action that in seeming to disregard his duties as a prince, he was only playing a part to make his reformation the brighter when it should occur? Here must be a morality in which the soul of Everyman is in no danger and undergoes no mental stress, and in which one of the contenders for his soul shows no interest in the struggle. *Henry IV* in parts or in toto is not a morality play.

Such judgments, in fact, become merely academic when one remembers that *Henry IV* was written for a single afternoon's entertainment in the Globe. It then appears as a dramatic integer, simple and symmetrical. Hal is at the center of the action, and the dramatic statement implied in that action is reinforced by the complementary and opposing comment of Hotspur on the one hand and Falstaff on the other. These are the three chief characters in the play, the *foci* upon which the action centers. The spring and direction of the action is toward a vindication of the honor of Hal, which must be made to exceed that of Hotspur in spite of his habitual association with Falstaff, who openly belies honor in its formal sense, and will have none of it. The end result is a clarification of the whole notion of honor as exemplified in Hal. This, I take it, is the theme of *Part 1*.

Hotspur's unrealistic conception of honor according to the code book has never caused the critics any trouble. He is a character drawn on simple lines. Convinced of the rightness of his brother-in-law's claim to the throne by his uncle, who sees an opportunity in Hotspur's enthusiasms over a wronged man's cause to gain his own ends, he is an appealing dramatic figure, and his sacrifice in the end through his uncle's dishonesty and cowardice is capable of inspiring a high degree of human sympathy. But it becomes apparent as the play unfolds that his espousal of his brother-in-law's cause is only one exhibition of his ambition for personal glory, and Hal, by overcoming him in personal combat at Shrewsbury, has deprived him of all. For others, except as they contribute to his personal ambitions, he has little thought. His honesty of conduct is his most outstanding trait, and he recognizes forthright bravery and loyalty of the clannish sort in his followers, to whom he serves as a thrilling example. But in pursuing his personal ends, he has no more thought for the value of others' lives than he has for his own. He will ride pell mell against increasingly chilly and hopeless odds, but he never gives a thought to the men, the common soldiers, whose personal loyalty will lead them without glory—"honor" in Hotspur's vocabulary—to their deaths.

In this respect, Hal easily and triumphantly exceeds Hotspur. "To save the blood on either side" in the impending engagement, he suggests single combat with his glittering adversary, precisely what Hotspur would have welcomed with a soldier's embrace had he known of it. Hal's honor is not plucked from the pale-faced moon. It is beyond all else an awareness that a definition of honor might more properly be modest and earth-born.

Within this larger concept of honor as a regard for the value of human life, Falstaff plays a more complicated and more sophisticated rôle. "Doomsday is near; die all, die merrily," cries Hotspur as the news of his father's and Glendower's defection makes him suddenly conscious of the perilously reduced ranks with which he must face the King's forces. It is a cry of desperation to which Douglas can only answer:

Talk not of dying; I am out of fear
 Of death or death's hand for this one-half year.
 (IV. i. 134-136)

Falstaff, on the other hand, coming upon the dead body of that brave soldier, Sir Walter Blunt, shows a marked distaste for such grinning honor. "Give me life," he insists, "which if I can save, so; if not, honor comes unlooked for, and there's an end" (V. iii. 162-165). As for the soldiers whom he has pressed into service, they are expendable, as he confesses to Hal; and Hal shows no signs of being shocked or morally outraged by Falstaff's bland opinion of such pitiful rascals: "Tut, tut; good enough to toss; food for powder, food for powder; they'll fill a pit as well as better: tush, man, mortal men, mortal men" (IV. ii. 71-74).

Obviously, it would be beside the point to argue that such remarks showed a callous indifference to the effusion of Christian blood in the man who regarded his own life at such a high rate of exchange. What it does stand for is a dramatic counterpoint to Hotspur's insensibility. And the reason that Hal is not outraged lies in the fact that in the spectacle of human slaughter through which Falstaff moves, in spite of his words, with such apparent unconcern, he expresses the incontrovertible factual report of the humanist who sees war for the inhuman business that it is. When Tillyard, seeking to press the play into the frame of a morality, finds in Falstaff the figure of dishonor, he gravely misunderstands the dramatic function of Falstaff in the play. For Shakespeare has put into the mouth of the old master of evasion the frankest, most honest statement in the play on the tin-soldiery of war: "Can honor set to a leg? . . . or an arm? . . . or take away the grief of a wound?" (V. i. 128-144). Honor, in the sense in which Hotspur takes it, is air, and Falstaff will properly have none of it.

But if Falstaff's soliloquy underlines the shallowness and irresponsibility of Hotspur, it also introduces the situation which reveals the limits of Falstaff's logic in Hotspur's tragic victimization. Shakespeare never exhibits a more acute sensibility of the potentialities for irony in the continuous action of the Globe stage. While Falstaff's formal conclusion that honor is a mere escutcheon is still ringing in the ears of the audience, the voice of Hotspur's uncle, "O, no, my nephew must not know the liberal and kind offer of the King" (V. ii. 1-2), gives proof of the real and substantial perfidy which makes of Hotspur a tragic exemplar of honor misdirected. Hal's honor has exceeded Hotspur's; now it also exceeds Falstaff's. It is a demonstration of Shakespeare's extraordinary sense of form that Hal, the dramatic center of the play, should make the final correction of focus, and that the stamp of humanity which defines honor should be fixed indelibly in a metaphor. The defeated Hotspur feels the cold hand of death on his tongue. Time, that takes survey of all the world, must have a stop, and now he, too, like the soldiers of Falstaff, has become food for powder. He for whom a kingdom was too small a bound will now find room enough—a feat the oily rascal could not match—in two paces of the vilest earth. Falstaff's jesting "food for powder" flicks into the mind as Hotspur begins the metaphor—"Food for . . ." and Hal completes it mordantly—"for worms, brave Percy" (V. iv. 85-86)—and thus in a phrase unites

in the common fate of death the foot-soldier and the gentleman. This is the irrefutable logic of war which leaves Falstaff's soliloquy-debate curiously empty. How illogical Hotspur's conduct, yet how honestly human it is!

Recent criticism has stressed Shakespeare's deep concern at the cancer of civil disorder as the patent substance of his political thought, the *leitmotif* of the English historical plays. In *1 Henry IV*, this general theme takes on a personal coloration in the tragic effusion of Hotspur's blood. It is right that Hal, deploring the overturn of political order, should at the same time be conscious of the cost of misdirected idealism in the simple, poignant obsequy, "Food for worms." This, in the progress of Shakespeare's thought, clears the way to that "certain convocation of politic worms" which busied themselves in Hamlet's brain: "Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table; that's the end" (IV. iii. 21-26).

It would not be difficult to illustrate Shakespeare's use elsewhere of the image echo as a dramatic device. Intent listeners will not have forgotten Hotspur's scornful boast in Act I that, if it were not for the fact that he would give satisfaction to the King, he would have poisoned Hal with a pot of ale, when they hear Falstaff's equally harmless threat to the potential robbers who have no mercy for him afoot: "An I have not ballads made on you all and sung to filthy tunes, let a cup of sack be my poison" (I. iii. 230-233; II. ii. 47-49). Perhaps they will remember also Hal's reminder to the King after the battle at Shrewsbury that were it not for his intervention, the insulting hand of Douglas would have been as speedy in his end "as all the poisonous potions in the world" (V. iv. 53-56). These echoes are for the keen ear, and there is a special pleasure in catching them, as alike, yet hauntingly, ironically different, they bind the play together with skeins of gossamer. Then, on occasion, one startling image sums up the play.

The University of Maryland.



The Battle of Bosworth, which ended the Wars of the Roses. From John Speed: *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* (1611). Reproduced by permission of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

The Catholic University *Macbeth*

GILES E. DAWSON

THE Speech and Drama Department of the Catholic University of America has in recent years built an excellent reputation for its Shakespeare productions, attaining with its *Lear* of 1948 a peak not often achieved anywhere. If this season's *Macbeth* (March 21 to April 5) did not reach the same high point, it can yet be chalked up as a success. Alan Schneider, the director, and all who participated in the production are to be congratulated.

In the main the interpretation was admirable, the moderate cutting of the text judiciously carried out. The play was recognizably Shakespeare's play from beginning to end. Though it was not made clear just what sort of creatures the Weird Sisters were supposed to be—a difficulty not for the first time encountered here, but one in which Henry N. Paul's *The Royal Play of Macbeth* might have been helpful—nevertheless the sort and degree of influence which they exert over Macbeth were, I believe, pretty much what Shakespeare intended: they second and reënforce the evil promptings of Macbeth's own mind. Lady Macbeth's position in the play is not greatly different. Macbeth himself constantly attempts to place responsibility for his crimes on the Lady. For Shakespeare the responsibility is Macbeth's own, and it is this responsibility which crushes him. In all this the Catholic University production was lucidly Shakespearean.

This lucidity, attained first of all by good direction, would still have been impossible without good casting and competent acting. The individual performances of the players were almost without exception worthy of praise. William Callahan in the title rôle and Eugene Picciano as Banquo deserve special commendation for their reading of the lines. Both must have been easily heard from the farthest seats, and both showed an awareness of Shakespeare's diction and poetry not fully shared by the other important members of the cast or, for that matter, of most casts, amateur or professional. Except that she was now and then difficult to understand in the sixth row center, the understudy Lady Macbeth (summoned, on the night when I was present, only four hours before curtain time) turned in a fine performance.

The more technical parts of the production—scenery, staging, business—were conceived and executed with notable skill. In the drama laboratory it is important that these technical skills be developed, but in my opinion the exercise of them is too apt to mar an otherwise good production. It is a danger inherent in laboratory productions, in which the desire to provide experience of all sorts for a large number of students leads to overelaboration. The result

in the scenery of the Catholic University *Macbeth* was a structure on, of course, several levels—one of them twelve or fifteen feet above the stage—vaguely reminiscent of Stonehenge, with, however, the inevitable stairs, some battlements in the background, a series of useful arches, and a conspicuously hung bell ("Awake, awake! Ring the alarum bell"). The set was a striking one, and as a portion of Dunsinane castle would not have been objectionable. But since it was the only set, the same megalithic structure, with the conspicuous alarum bell and its festooned rope, served also as the habitat of the witches, the Macbeths, and the Macduffs and as background for the ambushing of Banquo and Fleance, the immediately following banquet, the meeting in England, and the final battle. The effect was less than satisfactory. If a single set is to be used it must not obtrude itself upon the attention. An elaborate and arresting edifice seen again and again representing half a dozen scenes can hardly fail to destroy the illusion of movement which the bare Elizabethan stage made both easy and effective.

Much the same must be said of the business. In this production great technical skill was shown in this department, but there was too much of it. Through much of the play the witches remained aloft, gauntly postured against the sky, intently watching the doing-in of Banquo, the haunted feast, and the last end of Macbeth, and they joined in the concluding cry, "Hail, King of Scotland!" They appeared to be conceived as a sort of mute chorus of Fates, and the effect was to give them more prominence than Shakespeare intended them to have. (We ridicule the eighteenth century for preferring Tate to Shakespeare, but some of us are still trying to improve Shakespeare.) My complaint over this wilful departure from the text does not contradict my earlier assertion that the relations between Macbeth and the witches were rightly conceived, for in their unauthorized appearances the latter are neither seen nor heard by the *dramatis personae* and influence no one but the spectators. Other pieces of business at best superfluous were not wanting—the almost inevitable over-clowning of the porter; the ingeniously contrived appearance from time to time of multiple red-lighted windows, each framing a grotesque face or hand; the bearing of Lady Macbeth's corpse to an upper level of the stage, where her lord kneels beside it to deplore her death; the leaving it there on its litter, outlined against the sky, until (with a dagger) Macbeth receives his death blow close beside it.

All this display of technical stagecraft, this seeking after novelty of effect, comes between Shakespeare and the spectator and instead of helping the imagination tends to obscure the force and meaning of the play. It was in spite of this sort of thing, not at all because of it, that the Catholic University production came through to the spectator with a good measure of the real tragic wallop that Shakespeare can deliver.

The Folger Shakespeare Library

The Rosenbach-Bodmer Shakespeare Folios and Quartos

By JOHN FLEMING

Look Lucius, here's the book I sought for so.

(*Julius Caesar* IV. iii. 251)



AN event took place in the book world a few months ago which made history. The last and finest privately owned collection of Shakespeare folios and quartos was sold; and it was the first time in the history of the United States that a world famous collection of books left its shores for Europe.

The celebrated Rosenbach collection of Shakespeare folios and quartos was sold en bloc in January to Dr. Martin Bodmer of Geneva, Switzerland. It was the largest and most important transaction since 1914, when the Ninth Duke of Devonshire sold his Shakespeare collection (including the first quarto of *Hamlet*, London, 1603) to Henry E. Huntington.

The acquisition by Dr. Bodmer of the Rosenbach collection brings to Geneva one of the finest and most important collections of Shakespeare in the world and the only significant one in all Europe. Otherwise there are only eight quartos (none of which is a first edition) and two imperfect copies of the First Folio recorded as being in Europe.

The main portion of the Rosenbach collection was purchased by Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach in 1925 from Sir George Holford, whose father, Robert Stayner Holford, was one of the greatest collectors of books and manuscripts in the last century. Holford was probably unequalled in his search for perfection in books and manuscripts. His collections were not of great proportions, but the quality and condition of his books and manuscripts were unmatched.

The Holford First Folio was considered by all experts to be the finest copy known and one of only five perfect copies in original binding. It was purchased by Sir George Holford's father about 1840 for £250—the record price for a First Folio up to that time. The story of the value of the First Folio through the ages proves that great books always increase in value given enough time! The First Folio was published at £1 and maintained that figure for some time. In the latter part of the 17th century and during the 18th, there was a great revival of interest in Shakespeare and his works by scholars and collectors.

There is an interesting and popular tale which might be worth telling here. In 1790 the library of John Watson Reed, an attorney, was offered at auction in London. It contained a great (Roxburghe-Devonshire-Huntington) copy of the First Folio. The Duke of Roxburghe, anxious to obtain this copy, attended the

auction while the bookseller Nicol did his bidding. To the amazement of the audience the bidding rose to what was regarded as the exorbitant sum of twenty guineas. At this point Nicol passed to the Duke a slip of paper warning him to discontinue the contest. The Duke coolly returned the slip with the added words:

Lay on *Macduffe*
And damn'd be him, that first cries hold enough!

The Folio was knocked down to the Duke for £35.14s. He took possession of it immediately and marched away in triumph.

Subsequently the price of the volume rose by degrees to the £250 paid by Holford in 1840. It suddenly jumped in July 1864 to £716.25s., when the George Daniel copy was sold to Miss (later Baroness) Burdett-Coutts. At the sale of the late Baroness Burdett-Coutts in 1923 this same copy fetched £8600—about \$43,000. Mr. James S. B. Bohn was a prophetic man, but in a rather small way. He catalogued the Shakespearian books for the sale of the library of George Smith in July 1867 and under the description of the First Folio he wrote: "The difficulty of procuring a perfect copy is now so great and the competition, whenever one occurs, so strong that probably what our ancestors deemed dear at £100 will be regarded cheap at £1,000 by our successors." It was not long before June 1899 rolled around and Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan purchased privately a copy for more than £1,000. The record was publicly broken a month later when the Belleruche copy was sold at Christie's for £1700. The value of the volume rose with great intensity during the first years of the 20th century, culminating in 1934 at the Lord Roseberry sale when the First Folio was purchased for \$77,000.

The Second, Third and Fourth Folios in the Bodmer collection are in equally pristine condition and make it a peerless set of the immortal folios.

The collection of Rosenbach-Bodmer quartos is in a way even more remarkable. It contains, with but a single exception, a copy of every play by Shakespeare issued before the First Folio of 1623, and, with another single exception, a copy of every play separately printed before 1700.

The Rosenbach-Bodmer copy of *Troilus and Cressida* is a gem worthy of being deposited in the casket of *Darius*. It is completely uncut, and is the only copy in such state of preservation of any Shakespeare play printed before his death. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that it is one of the most desirable volumes owned privately. The *Troilus and Cressida*, sad to say, is one of the very few first Shakespeares that are lacking in the fabulous Folger Library. Another play, which is the only perfect copy owned privately, is the great "Pied Bull" *King Lear* (1608), one of only six perfect copies of that magnificent tragedy which have survived. Almost as rare are the *Love's Labor's Lost* (1598); the finest copy known of *Much Ado About Nothing* (1600), from the Clawson collection; and the first issue of *Henry IV*, Part 2 (1600). Several first printings of Shakespeare are unobtainable. In such cases the earliest available editions are included. There are only two imperfect copies of the first edition of *Hamlet* and six of the second edition, all of which are in public institutions. Included in the collection is the third edition, issued in 1611, as is the second edition of *Romeo and Juliet* (1599). So, also, are *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1619); *Merry*

Wives of Windsor (1519); *Richard II* (1608); *Titus Andronicus* (1611); and *Othello* (1622). Of the plays printed separately for the first time after the folio of 1623 there are *Macbeth* (1673) and *Julius Caesar* (1684).

Two volumes in the collection are not plays by well deserve the attention of scholars and collectors. The superb Holford copy of the first edition of *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), Shakespeare's second published work, is one of the most desirable books in the whole range of English poetry. The 1640 *Poems* is the first collected edition of Shakespeare's non-dramatic verse, and the Bodmer copy is in a rare and perfect state. Here must be mentioned a volume which was purchased from the Rosenbach Collection by Dr. Bodmer several years ago—a perfect copy of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (London, 1609), First Edition, one of the most valuable books in the world and one of the rarest. There are only twelve copies known, three of which are imperfect. The present one is the only one owned privately.

In the collecting of Elizabethan drama, among the most elusive rarities are the plays at one time attributed to Shakespeare or published with his name on the title. In the Rosenbach-Bodmer collection are the great copy of *Lochrine* (1595), which belonged originally to the Master of the King's Revels, and the rare first editions of *The London Prodigal* (1605), *The Puritan* (1607), and *Sir John Oldcastle* (1600). These supposititious plays are generally scarcer than Shakespeare's true works, and some of the few great collections of quartos comparable to the present one lack them.

There are in the collection three source plays which bear the same title as plays written by Shakespeare, *Henry V* (1617), *King John* (1622), and the great Mostyn copy of *King Leir* (1605), all of which are exceedingly rare. It is amazing to find together the three "King Leirs," the foundation play and the first and second editions of Shakespeare's.

The collection was the last of its kind owned privately in America and its ownership has been a source of great joy and pride to Messrs. Rosenbach who shared it graciously with all who were interested.

By this acquisition, Dr. Bodmer has gone far in establishing the internationalism of Shakespeare. Through his foresight he has placed at the disposal of continental scholars the primary editions and the later adaptations upon which bibliographical, textual, and critical studies must be based. While Dr. Bodmer has made a great contribution to literature through his famed continental collection, it can be only with pride that English and American scholars realize that this great collection is now available to continental humanists.

Dr. Bodmer is the vice-president of the international Red Cross and the founder of the Gottfried Keller prize. He received an honorary doctorate from Frankfurt University during the Goethe celebration in 1949. Dr. Bodmer carries on the tradition of all the great collectors; in the words of the *New York Times* editorial "... Shakespeare belongs to the ages and to the world. If some of his quartos and first folios are in Switzerland instead of here, we need not feel badly. ... Dr. Bodmer has made the right kind of history. What the world needs today is more bibliophiles and fewer politicians, statesmen and dictators."

New York City.



The Camp of the Earl of Richmond (later Henry VII) at Milford Haven, near the end of the Wars of the Roses. From the Folger Shakespeare Library copy of R. Holinshed's *The Laste Volume of the Chronicles of England . . .*, 1577, p. 1414.

Reviews

A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. By MORRIS PALMER TILLEY. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950. Pp. xiii + 854. \$15.00.

John Heywood, in the first half of the sixteenth century, quoted the proverb, "Euery man as he loueth Quoth the good man, whan that he kyst his coowe"; an old farmer said to me some 400 years later, "Every man to his taste, as the farmer said when he kissed his cow." "The loudest cow does not give the most milk" was recently quoted to a Russian statesman as a Slav proverb; a seventeenth-century Scottish proverb-collection gives the words, "The cow that is loudest in the lou gives not ay most milk." "Everybody's business is nobody's business" was as much a proverb to Aristotle as it is to us today. The proverb about bringing a horse to the water has been part of the English language for close on 800 years. Proverbs, though they are "the Philosophy of a People," know little of national boundaries, and little of the barriers of the centuries. But it may be argued that they were, in England, taken most seriously and regarded as most respectable in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Heywood's collection appeared in 1546; many others followed it. Sir Thomas Wilson regarded the use of proverbs as a necessary part of the art of rhetoric. John Lyly and the later Euphuists made the use of proverbs nauseous in its monotonous extravagance.

Many plays of the sixteenth century are splendid hunting-grounds for the proverb-collector. Henry Porter, to take one minor example, in *The Pleasant History of the Two Angry Women of Abingdon*, introduced a comic serving-man, Nicholas Proverbs, who speaks almost entirely in proverbs and is (alas!) a sad bore to us to-day. Nicholas Breton, outside the dramatists, in his *No Whippinge, nor Trippinge: but a Kinde Friendly Snippinge*, urged "good writers then, if any such yee be, In verse or prose" to "Learne English Prouerbs, haue them wel by heart, And count them often on your fingers ends." Breton was himself capable of writing innumerable lines so gnomic that it is difficult to judge when he is quoting proverbs and when he is thinking proverbially. In *No Whippinge*, he writes,

Be not a churle, nor yet exceed in cheere.
Hold fast thine owne, pay truly what thou owest:
Sell not too cheape, and doe not buy to deare:
Tell but to few, what secret ere thou knowest,
And take good heed to whom, & what thou shewest:
Loue God, thy self, thy wife, thy children, friend,
Neighbour, and seruant, and so make an end. (B3^v)

Some writers of the time used proverbs ill; some used them well; William Shakespeare used them better than any man. He saw that the proverb was, what Mark Pattison judged religion to be, a good servant and a bad master. He was never as absurdly impressed by the proverb as was Breton; he never regarded it as the Caesar of final appeal. Though the proverb may be wise, Shakespeare, you feel, was wiser. And when he does invent a comic man, Francis Feeble, who has nothing to say that cannot be found in a dictionary of

proverbs, he displays him in three dimensions and yet silences him before he can weary you. Feeble has but one speech which is longer than a line. This is the summit of his eloquence:

I care not, a man can die but once: wee owe a death. I will neuer beare a base minde: if it be my destinie, so: if it be not, so: no man is too good to serue his Prince: and let it goe which way it will, he that dies this yeere, is quit for the next.

We have heard it all before; but we see him as a man of flesh, blood, and an immortal soul.

Shakespeare often quotes proverbs; more often, perhaps, he prefers to allude to them. He could have issued Leontes with the recognized phrase, "The cuckold is the last that knows of it"; he chose to have him say,

They're here with me already; whisp'ring, rounding:
Sicilia is a so-forth: 'tis farre gone,
When I shall gust it last.

Various aspects of Shakespeare's thought have for long been the playground of criticism. His use of proverbs has been until recent times neglected—with unhappy results. In nineteenth-century Shakespeare allusion-books, we find, as examples of his influence, the use of proverbs by later authors; and he has been thought to echo others when he was doing no more than use a proverb which others also had used; Rushton's pleasing little book on the influence of Lyly on Shakespeare relies almost entirely on Shakespeare's use of proverbs. The dire results of Francis Bacon's fondness for them need no mention. Thomas Kyd and, later, William Shakespeare wrote of hares that pulled or plucked dead lions by the beard—and, although hares had been insulting upon dead lions before Kyd or Shakespeare was born, and the beards of lions were caught in Old Testament days, Dr. Dover Wilson must draw odd conclusions. When Celia says of Orlando that "with pure loue, & troubled braine, He hath t'ane his bow and arrowes, and is gone forth to sleepe," Dr. Wilson must build theories of revision and miss the fact that both Nashe and Greene use this bow-and-arrows phrase in a proverbial manner. (The phrase must be a ridiculed quotation from a romance or ballad; I cannot trace it.)

More lately, the problems of the English proverb, by itself in general, and in connection with Shakespeare in particular, have received attention. Vincent Stuckey Lean's sprawling, unordered and partially unreferenced and unindexed posthumous *Collectanea* (1902-1904) is a vast rag-bag of proverbs and oddment sayings and phrases; a dozen eager young men would do well to set it in order. M. P. Tilley's *Elizabethan Proverb Lore* (1927) did much to illuminate the use of proverbs by Euphuists and by Shakespeare. Three virtuous attempts at English proverb-dictionaries have, since then, come before us. First was G. L. Apperson's *English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases* (1929); then the two editions (1935 and 1948) of *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, of which the second, aided by the remarkable collections of F. P. Wilson, is admirable, and the first is not. Now we have Tilley's final work. There have also been the vastly valuable publications of Richard Jente, Max Förster, Archer Taylor, Whiting, and others, the Scottish Text Society's 1924 edition of David Ferguson's *Scottish Proverbs*, and the Folk-Lore Society's too sieve-like *Proverb Literature* (1930).

Tilley's posthumous work is a Colossus among proverb-dictionaries (though dishonourable graves need not yet be found for Apperson and Oxford). The

fact that Tilley lists between 11,700 and 11,800 proverbs is its own spokesman; but there is more to be said. His classifications of the old collections is almost wholly admirable and remarkably near to completeness; I cannot imagine that any man has ever made a more-thorough combing of the literature of the time for so general a specialised subject.

Before Apperson, proverb-dictionaries were good reading-matter and bad reference-books. Apperson made his useful by arranging a great proportion of his examples under subjects. The second edition of Oxford is arranged in "alphabetical order of some (usually the first) significant word" in the proverbs, with a certain amount of good cross-referencing. Tilley's arrangement is by the first noun-substantive in the proverb, with lavish wealth of cross-referencing. Of all the proverb-dictionaries which I have seen, it is, I think, the best, the most useful, the most adequately arranged, and the most interesting.

The sad truth of the matter is that no method of arrangement of words can possibly satisfy every reader. If I want to know about the proverbial comparison "as true as steel," it takes me next to no time to find it in Oxford (under TRUE) or in Tilley (under STEEL). Oxford tells me other things about truth: turtle to mate, God is in heaven, gospel—and so forth. Tilley tells me other things about steel: stiff, strong, tough, trusty, sure, Ripon spurs, steel to the back, steel cuts steel—and so forth. And if I chance to desire knowledge about both truth and steel, I'll be wise to carry both Tilley and Oxford about with me. Tilley does provide me with more than 45 pages of cross-check in an index of significant words. I have examined this fairly searchingly and have found few holes in it; but my eyes are no fonder than yours of tracking 33 references in the form of C37, C819, etc. (I cannot, by the way, guess why no one before thought of numbering the entries; I numbered my Oxford as soon as I bought it.) As tribute to the completeness of Tilley, I here mention that Oxford misses 14 of his 33 TRUE entries, that he misses one of Oxford's, "A true man and a thief think not the same" (see *Much Ado* III. iii. 53), and that his L548 and P545 ought to be under TRUE in the significant index and aren't.

No proverb-dictionary will ever be perfect for everyone: if I had the dictionary of my dreams, I should need to beg a little changeling boy to be my henchman and wheel it around for me. Tilley's book appears to me to be, by every standard of comparison, the best of its kind. It comes nearer than any other to completeness. It is the easiest to find one's way about in. It is amazingly well balanced and sane (and I know too well the sinister effect of proverb-hunting upon mental equilibrium). It is so intrinsically interesting that I have been a twelvemonth reading it when I should have been writing a review of it. It is, to my way of thinking, a beautiful book, not an inch thick despite its near-900 pages, with a page lay-out as alluring as any can ever be when double-column arrangement cannot be avoided.

Morris Palmer Tilley died before this great book reached its final form. His loss is lamentable. "His Dictionary," as the foreword states, "is the achievement of a scholar whose special fitness for the task will probably remain without a parallel." There is nevertheless cause for rejoicing in that the book fell into such capable hands after Tilley's death. The final editing for the press was performed by Professor Hereward T. Price. The modesty of Professor Price's foreword makes it difficult to judge what credit he can claim for the excellence of the work. He alone, I suppose, can know what thanks we owe him; it must be more than he would have us believe. The lack of Tilley's full introduction (sad enough lack) is all that there is to show that "he died and left it unfinished."

I have been so warm in the praise of this book that I might be suspected of belonging to that most unbearable class of reviewers, the Balaam's asses who will permit blessing but no cursing. But now that I have said so much to hail a book that has given me more pleasure and profit than I ever thought a book could give me, allow me to pick a few holes. There is hardly a spot where I can say, "This is bad"; there are a few spots where I can say, "I think this could be better." I have no doubt that Tilley's book is, and for many years to come will be, the proverb-dictionary that every English scholar will have to keep on his shelves (if he isn't, as I have been doing for months, carrying it around in a hand-bag by day and propping it on the front of him in bed before he goes to sleep at night); and there is every reason why it should run into a multitude of editions. I have therefore some suggestions to make.

What do I demand of a dictionary of sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century English proverbs? It must begin by having as its skeleton a complete index to all the available proverb-collections of the period, printed or manuscript. Proverb-collections are hardly ever original compilations; those of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries were notably derivative. If we are to estimate what was original and valuable in any collection, we must be able to learn what its predecessors did and did not include. Near-completeness is not enough. An obvious objection is that the old proverb-collectors patently did not always know what a proverb was. A printed collection of 1621, for instance, gives as proverbs, "He is overcome with vice," "Hee is a verie Miser," "I haue not to doe with it," "He is unworthie of his place," "Hee will never bee wyse," and other entries as unconvincing. These things are not proverbs: they are, in fact, the unproverbial equivalents of Erasmus' Adages. But we need them indexed on the (false) assumption that whatever a sixteenth- or seventeenth-century proverb-collector called a proverb was a proverb. The postulated index would naturally contain collections that set out to be lists of proverbs—the Fergusson printed collection is a good example. It should also contain the proverbs from proverb-writings which are not mere lists—such as Heywood's verses, Davies of Hereford's proverb-epigrams and (despite its eighteenth-century date) Swift's *Polite and Ingenious Conversation*.

That I regard as the minimum requirement, the skeleton. The flesh and blood would be provided by the examples of proverbs derived from other sources, plays, sermons, poems, letters, from all the surviving written material of the time. Many proverbs would here be added which had escaped the nets of the earlier list-makers.

I cavil, therefore, for a start, at the claim of the publishers, on the dust-jacket, that the Tilley book is "definitive." The word is not one which I should be happy to define, but if it implies that this book says the last word on the proverbs of its period, the claim cannot be maintained. No such last-word book could be placed upon the front of a recumbent man without fatal results. When the last word has been said, every use of every proverb in the extant writing of the time will have been recorded; which is absurd.

The Scottish Text Society edition of Fergusson reprints the text of the 1641 edition. It adds a printing of a manuscript collection which is closely connected with the 1641 text. Some of the 1641 entries seem to have eluded Professor Tilley; if numbers 457, 679, 711, 734, and 866 are given in Tilley, they are so cunningly buried that I have been unable to exhumate them. (Some of the burying is surely too deep. Fergusson 664 is "Na man can seek his marrow in the kirne, as weil as hee that hes been in it himself," which you will find in Tilley as W353, under WIFE, with no cross-referencing from MAN, MARROW

or KIRNE.) The inclusion of proverbs from the manuscript collection clearly does not attempt completeness. I have noted also failures to give references to proverbs in the Swift book even though Tilley quotes the book elsewhere and the proverb is given by him. It is unfortunate that Bartholomew Robertson's most delightful collection of proverbs has not, either in its 1621 London (Bernard Alsop) edition or in its 1622 Aberdeen (Edward Raban) edition, been examined. Robertson gives many earlier examples of proverbs which both Tilley and Oxford find; he gives some which they both miss; it is clear that John Clarke milked Robertson for his own 1639 *Paroemiologia anglo-latina*.

Reliance upon the Scottish Text Society Fergusson has had lugubrious results. The STS editor judged that "the whole [manuscript] must be ascribed to some period earlier than 1641, in which year Fergusson's collection was first printed." Tilley always allots to it the date "c.1598," the year in which Fergusson "departed this life." After examination of the two texts as printed by STS (and without inspecting the manuscript), I am completely convinced that the MS. must derive from either the 1641 text or a now lost, earlier printed edition of the same book. Some at least of the MS. must be twenty years later than 1598: almost all the entries in its last nine pages in the STS edition come from Fynes Morison's *Itinerary* (1617) and the 1618 edition of Sir John Harington's epigrams. The "c.1598" pushes back the date of a vast number of proverbs an unjustifiable amount. Tilley rarely quotes proverbs from the MS. collection unless they receive the backing of the 1641 text, but the date is constantly "c.1598," and, unless there are verbal differences, no reference to 1641 is made.

The greatest alteration in the book which I should urge is a horrifyingly radical one. I see no reason why a dictionary of sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century proverbs should much worry itself about the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. I do not see how it can avoid taking considerable interest in centuries before the sixteenth. The proverbs of Shakespeare can be understood without the proverbs of Charles Dickens; without those of Chaucer they cannot be understood. The having of any *terminus a quo* at all seems to me undesirable. Tilley's first example for "Troy was" (T540) is from Shelton's *Don Quixote*, part 2 (1620), with devil a nod in the direction of Virgil. Elsewhere in the book we are given many references to Erasmus, without a hint of whence his Adages derive; he was not the first to set down the words *Naturam expellas furca* (see N50). Farcical claims have been made for the classical learning of Elizabethan authors; we now know how much they relied on Erasmus for their proverbs and similes; but there were many Elizabethans also who read the works of Horace. Erasmus is not involved in the oddity of W664, "The woman that smells of nothing smells best." Tilley's first quotation (1529) is, "Plautus saith, A woman euer smelleth best when she smelleth of nothing"; his last (1655) is "As Tully saith of women, They smell best which smell of nothing." The credit is Plautus's and we should have been told as much.

Here are some minor matters. D76: "He is bursen all day with bearing timber to the crag" (i.e. with bringing cups to his mouth). *Bursen* is glossed as "breathless(?)." Does it not mean "bursten," ruptured? G249: "There is God in the ambry." "Ambry" is glossed as "cupboard"; surely it must refer to the tabernacle-ambury of a church. S1034: "To go to Sweatland, or into Cornelius' tub." The punning reference to Sweden should be indicated. U2: "An unch is a feast of bread and cheese," "unch" being glossed as "ounce." This is quoted from Fergusson MS., 100, where it reads "Aneuche is a feast of bread and chise." It is also in the 1641 printed text (number 104), where it reads "Anuch

is a feast (of bread and cheise)." Tilley's second reference is to R.B., *Adagia Scotica*, 1668. I have not examined this, but R.B. is a constant pickpurse of Fergusson's wit and, whether or not he reads "unch," there can be small doubt that "anuch" (or "aneuche") is the correct reading and that it means "enough."

Tilley quotes from Fergusson and others, W758, "After word comes weird," a proverb apparently unknown outside Scotland, explained by Kelly in 1721 as "A facetious answer to them who call you by a higher Title than your present Station deserves; as calling a young Clergyman Doctor, or a young Merchant Alderman, as if you would say, all in good time." To link this with the weirdness of the sisters in

Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came Missiues
from the King, who all-hail'd me *Thane* of Cawdor, by
which Title before, these weyward Sisters saluted me,

seems to me vastly and delightfully ingenious and much too far-fetched for probability.

I am, as any Englishman must be, baffled by Tilley's treatment of the word which he calls "ASS = rump". The spelling *ass* for what we English call *arse* has, as far as I know, no sort of historical justification and Tilley cannot of course give a single example of such a spelling among his entries A380 to A387; and I for one object no more than I do when he omits the fifth letter from the word which I should spell *valour*. The mystery for me lies in the fact that if you turn to A326 you will find the word ARSE twice used as a headword. I can, I think, hardly be blamed for wondering where my elbow is. I do not wish to linger over this word, but it seems interesting that one should find that it was good enough for Saint Thomas More and not good enough for the editors of the Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs; they omit, on, I suppose, "grounds of pudibundity," the comparison "as bare as a bird's arse" (Tilley's B391) and conceal from you the shameful fact that so saintly a man could use so unsaintly a word. You are, however, permitted to know that Francis Bacon used the word.

One of the great glories of Tilley is the Shakespeare Index, which provides no fewer than 2923 references to lines in the plays and poems. It is sad that one will have to make one's own lists for his lesser contemporaries. Some additions to *Romeo and Juliet* might be considered. C51: A good candleholder proves a good gamester; cf. For I am prouerb'd with a Grandsier Phrase, Ile be a Candle-holder and looke on. C111: The case is altered . . .; cf. I by my troth, the case may be amended. C141: A cat may look at a king; cf. and euery Cat and Dog, And little Mouse, euery vnworthy thing Liue here in Heauen and may looke on her, But *Romeo* may not. In 2 *Henry IV*, the *Bona-Roba, Iane Night-worke*, is rightly referred to N184; by the same token, Master *Surecard* should be referred to C74.

I quibble about some names and dates in the Bibliography. Mennis and Smith had no more connection with *Wit's Recreations* than to be bound up with it in two nineteenth-century reprints (and the reference to Franklin, 1739, under W676 is inadequate; the epigram comes from Edward May's *Epigrams*, 1633, but Franklin probably collected it from *Wit's Recreations*, which included it; the Glass-without-a-G epigram, quoted in G138 from a 1669 book is in the 1640 edition of *Wits Recreations*). Does anyone consider that *The Trimming of Thomas Nashe* is by Gabriel Harvey? Or *How a Man May Chase* by Joshua Cooke? Or *Quips upon Questions* by John Singer? Or *Quippes for Vpstart . . . Gentlewomen* by Stephen Gosson? *Quips* is by Robert Armin; *Quippes*, almost beyond doubt, by Nicholas Breton; and is not Thomas Heywood usually cred-

ited with *How a Man?* Richard Carew's translation of Huarte should not be dated 1616; complete copies of the 1594 edition exist and a few pages of an earlier, John Wolfe, edition (presumably 1590) were salvaged not long ago from the binding of a British Museum book. The dating of Jonson's *Tale of a tub*, "1640," is surely deceptive. The use of a medial *v* in the bringing down to lower-case of a word like "havnting" is surely a grotesque solecism; it seems to be constant in the Bibliography. "*HAVNTING*," yes; "havnting," certainly not.

I do not propose to waste more space in suggesting any new proverbs for inclusion. I do however urge that other good proverb-sources be investigated. The sermon-writers are fairly well represented, but much more could be found in the work of the silver-tongued Henry Smith; Richard Sibbes also had a gift for bursting into the colloquial in his sermons; he seems not to have been examined. Wherever the colloquial can be expected it is good to hunt for proverbs; I have dug profitably in letters, reports of trials, the innumerable satirical poems of the Restoration, ballads, and (particularly) epigrams. The epigrams in Hereford Davies's *Wits Bedlam* and all those of Henry Parrot would give a good yield.

Tilley's book is a rich and glorious one, and if I were permitted to sprawl over more pages talking about it, I should continue not with cavils but with ornate eulogies. I do no more than asseverate that it has given me immeasurable joy, drawn me from chimney-corners, and made me unbearable to my friends because of my uncontrollable praisings of it and urgings to buy it. I shall have been heartbreakingly inefficient if I leave you with the impression that the small faults I have found come at all near to outweighing its stupendous virtues. An eighteenth-century proverb-monger wrote, "Wise men make Proverbs, but Fools Repeat 'em," and I would add "Wise Men make Proverb-Dictionaries, but Fools Review 'em."

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The Imperial Theme: Further Interpretations of Shakespeare's Tragedies including the Roman Plays. By G. WILSON KNIGHT. London: Methuen & Co., 1951. Pp. xvi + 367.

About 1930 G. Wilson Knight went into revolt against the criticism of Shakespeare then current and announced and exemplified a new method and point of view. The beginnings are to be found in *Myth and Miracle* (1928), and his doctrines were clearly stated in the introduction to *The Wheel of Fire* (1930), were further explained in the introduction to *The Imperial Theme* (1931), and found possibly their most characteristic application in *The Shakespearean Tempest* (1932). Knight acknowledged some indebtedness to A. C. Bradley and to Caroline F. E. Spurgeon and more immediate obligation to Colin Still (*Shakespeare's Mystery Play*, 1921) and to Mgr. F. C. Kolbe (*Shakespeare's Way*, 1930).

Knight begins by drawing a distinction between "criticism" and "interpretation," in which criticism gets the worse of the comparison, for the author's definition of criticism falls somewhat short in scope and function of say Matthew Arnold's or Irving Babbitt's definition. "We should not, in fact, think critically at all," he says, although he insists on our seeing the play under examination "spatially" as well as "temporally." By the word "spatially" he designates "a set of correspondences which relate to each other independently of the time-sequence." "Such are," he says puzzlingly, "the intuition-intelligence oppo-

sition active within and across *Troilus and Cressida*, the death-theme in *Hamlet*, the nightmare evil of *Macbeth*." Then he adds, "This I have sometimes called the play's 'atmosphere.'" In interpretation, he says, "there is a fusing rather than a contrast; and where a direct personal symbol growing out of the dominating atmosphere is actualized, it may be a supernatural being, as the Ghost, symbol of the death-theme in *Hamlet*, or the Weird Sisters, symbols of evil in *Macbeth*." In another place the author speaks of "the spatial, that is, the spiritual, quality."

Knight makes many rejections. "To analyse," he says, "the sequence of events, the 'causes' linking dramatic motive to action and action to result in time, is a blunder instinctive to the human intellect." "I am not concerned," he declares, "with the poet's 'consciousness' or 'intentions.'" The "intellectual mode" often brings with it "concepts irrelevant to the nature of the work, such as 'intentions', 'sources', and 'characters,'" and he adds the statement that the intellect, with its essentially ethical outlook, works havoc with our minds, "since it is trying to impose on the vivid reality of art a logic totally alien to its nature." Neither Plutarch, Holinshed, Virgil, nor the Bible can be considered a cause of Shakespeare's poetry; the word "source" is therefore a "false metaphor." The author inveighs against the study of character, "since it is so constantly entwined with a false and unduly ethical criticism." He objects also to the "constant and fruitless search for motives." After ruling out so much what has the author left?

He says rather obscurely that we should regard each play as a visionary whole, close knit in (1) personification, (2) atmospheric suggestion, and (3) direct symbolism, but makes his doctrine more intelligible under these captions: (1) By preserving absolute truth to our own imaginative reaction we should form a conception of each play as a visionary unit. In doing this we should avoid "selecting what is easy to understand and forgetting the super-logical." (2) We should recognize the "temporal" (the narrative) and the "spatial" (the spiritual) elements. "We should not look for verisimilitude to life, but rather see each play as an expanded metaphor." (3) "We should analyse the use and meaning of direct poetical symbolism—that is, events whose significance can hardly be related to the normal processes of actual life." "Also the minor symbolic imagery of Shakespeare, which is extremely consistent, should receive careful attention." (4) We should set aside the plays from *Julius Caesar* to *The Tempest* as a sequence to be called "Shakespeare's Progress." Only number 3 of this list is operative, the others being of course doctrinal, and to the two operations called for the author would restrict himself. If he had actually done so, he would never have pleased the world as he has, for in neither of these two fields is his work satisfactory. In the study of imagery the author is ingenious and interesting, but not so discriminating as the late Miss Spurgeon. Not every image in a concordance-like bundle harmonizes with the series, as when we are asked to regard Falstaff's descent from the clothesbasket into the Thames as a "tempest," or to regard the witches' brew in *Macbeth*, which as the author admits is truly "indigestible," as contributory to the idea of feasting.

It is immediately necessary to find out what the author means by symbolism, and he gives us several definitions. "It is," he says, "exactly, and only, this imaginative appeal and conviction which, on the plane of intellectual interpretation, constitutes symbolism," and later, "I have already hinted that any immediate appeal to the imagination constitutes a symbolic force to the intelligence." But he goes on in a rather bewildering fashion: "Any one symbol is

not a symbol of any one thing in particular but holds rather a number of suggestions. A pure symbol has, indeed, infinite relations: it is both infinite and yet closely defined. Everything in the art form that is momentarily associated with it undergoes a dynamic change; while it, too, undergoes a dynamic change with every fresh association. . . . [The sea] becomes a symbol only when we start to interpret." And again, "A poet's symbol has thus queer propensities. It may often be equivalent to its opposite in the sense that any contrast is a comparison." It is obvious that these definitions do not agree very well with current usage and may therefore cause perplexity. Symbols are thought of as a result of social agreement, as that which suggests something else by reason of a fixed relationship, and this idea of definiteness carries over to the conventional signs used in mathematics, music, and science. One can hardly escape the opinion that Knight's symbols constitute a shifting intellectual foundation.

In the larger task of forming conceptions of each play as a visionary unit the author presents us with a series of phrases often brilliantly suggestive, but it is difficult to see in them any coordination, psychological, social, literary, or metaphysical. Nevertheless, by a reasonable and sufficient amplification they may serve well, except, I think, when they are offered in pairs, that is, when a play is subjected to partition by the opposition of two antagonistic forces within the play. The most conspicuous and, I think, lamentable failure is in the treatment of *Hamlet*.

The author seems often to determine the atmosphere of a play from its earlier parts. In *Hamlet* he found a deeply dejected hero contemplating suicide, also a ghost with a harrowing tale of murder to unfold. From these cases came a suggestion of death, and the opposite of death is life. Hamlet perforce becomes a symbol of death, and perfectly awful things happen to Shakespeare's splendid, unfortunate young prince. Qualities associated with death are bestowed upon him and follow him inescapably to the end. This is peculiarly unfortunate, for Hamlet is a tragic character of the stoical sort, like Prometheus in Aeschylus and Hercules in Seneca's two great plays. Hamlet was never proud or prosperous so that he might be a target for jealous gods. Hamlet and Hercules struggle through many vicissitudes, faithful to their principles, and achieve victory in their deaths. Knight represents Hamlet as soul-sick, misanthropic, bitter, cynical, and stuffed with hate. Hamlet is said to deny the existence of romantic love even when his heart is breaking as he tests Ophelia out three several times to see if she is faithful to him. Since Claudius is "a good and gentle king" and a ruler who upholds law and order, Hamlet, we are told, is such a trouble to the state that he is hated by everybody and is actually said to resemble Iago. His pitiful words at the grave of Ophelia are described as "an outbreak." Surely the author could not have been carried to such lengths of misunderstanding except by a too rigid application of a false or inadequate theory. There are two oversights that indicate that the author was temporarily blinded. He fails to see that Hamlet is no common revenge monger, but is a prince of the blood royal who has had laid upon him by divine authority the duty, not only of avenging a natural father, but of working God's justice upon a murderous and unprincipled usurper. Secondly, the author fails to see the true significance of Hamlet's speech to Horatio in the second scene of the fifth act (ll. 230-234), the one that begins, "Not a whit, we defy augury" and ends "The readiness is all," a speech that shows what Hamlet has grown into, namely, that he is ready to act and to leave the consequences to destiny, a basal principle of Renaissance stoicism. Knight does not abandon his belief that Hamlet is an unhuman death-symbol, first presented in *The Wheel of Fire*, although he

modifies it and makes it less harsh in an essay, "The Rose of May," in *The Imperial Theme*, and still more in a new essay, "Hamlet Reconsidered," added to the revised edition of *The Wheel of Fire* (1949).

The same mistaken determination of the meaning of a play, the same bifurcation from the choice of a caption, does much to spoil an otherwise masterly essay on *Coriolanus* in *The Imperial Theme*. From the earlier part of the play the author gets an impression of metallic hardness. An outgrowth from this is the conception of *Coriolanus* as an embodiment of "iron-hearted Pride." The author noted the right idea but did not adopt it. He says of a series of images from nature that "such imagery continually suggests the inborn inequality of men." This important suggestion of *Coriolanus* as an aristocrat gives way, however, to the belief that *Coriolanus* must be completely devoid of the qualities of love, humanity, pity, and justice. Consistency in an aristocrat demands that he shall be aristocratic. He must despise the common people, not as such, but only when they aspire beyond their station. An aristocrat must have his code of best behavior both in war and peace, and Knight ignores or belittles the social conduct of *Coriolanus*. *Coriolanus* won the support of the people, but was treated in the most villainous way by the tribunes, who were despicable demagogues. His banishment from Rome was an injustice, an unspeakable shame. A non-existent antinomy between pride and love results in the distortion of a great play.

The noble, tender-hearted, and sincere Brutus is made the victim of a bifurcation of *Julius Caesar* between strict honor, on the one side, and what the author strangely calls "eroticism" on the other. By eroticism he means the spirit and practice of love. Brutus is forced to act on the wrong side, so that the interpretation seems almost perverse. *Macbeth* fares better, especially in a chapter in *The Wheel of Fire* where *Macbeth* is presented as Shakespeare's most profound and mature vision of evil. A chapter in *The Imperial Theme*, "An Essay on Life-Themes in *Macbeth*," closes with the fine conclusion that "the whole play may be writ down as a wrestling of destruction with creation."

In that volume also are two long essays on *Antony and Cleopatra*, and into them Knight puts some of his finest work. There is hardly to be found a finer piece of writing and a more convincing *explication de texte* than is the second of these, "The Diadem of Love." It cannot, however, be said that even these essays, particularly the first, are entirely free from forced interpretation that seems to vitiate Knight's doctrine. Nothing in Shakespeare or in life can be presented as exactly white or exactly black, and, although Knight tends to do this, it is only fair to say that in many single judicious sentences and brief paragraphs he reveals his reasonableness. We are asked to regard *Antony and Cleopatra* as an expression of "the all-transcending humanism which endows man with a supernal glory." By "humanism" Knight means humanity or the quality of being human. He begins with an unconditional endorsement of Antony's love speech in the first scene of the play, "Let Rome in Tiber melt . . . We stand up peerless" (ll. 33-39). This gives him the idea of love as a protagonist, and it is easy and within the range of the play to see that war is the antagonist. In the contest between these mighty opposites love is the victor. "Antony in both is supreme—his peerless activity in the front of action shows him noble: his love shows him divine." Knight calls this issue a "life-vision of infinity" and declares that feasting is its life-force. Egyptian revelry ("if not blurred by any too strict an ethic"), the life-breeding ooze of Nile, and the chaste vision of *Cleopatra's* unchastity, melting, dissolving, blending with one another, make the earth vibrate, "its myriad whirling atoms alive, burning, dancing, quiring

the immortal theme." The author's interest is mainly in Cleopatra, and Antony as warrior, statesman, and plain man receives relatively minor consideration. If it would not infringe on the forbidden ground of ethics, one might suggest that in men's minds for two thousand years the story of Antony has been the tragedy of tragedies, for he was the man who threw away, not only the world, but his personal honor for a love that "nick'd his captainship" and "subdued his judgment too." "O, my fortunes have corrupted honest men!"

It is, as considerably suggested, doubtful whether G. Wilson Knight is completely successful either in his treatment of Shakespeare's plays as wholes or in his selection and application of single images. But whatever the detraction may be, he "has a merit to choke it in the utterance." He is a poet let loose in the arena of prosaic critics. I know of no Shakespeare commentary of greater eloquence and insight than his. So great and so inspiring is his running commentary that the reader is annoyed when the author leaves off temporarily to make unimportant remarks about images and symbols. Indeed, there is a frequent contradiction between an almost perfect commentary and a most imperfect theory. Open *The Imperial Theme* almost at random and this contradiction will stare you in the face. Knight has the good fortune, or the basal integrity, usually to disregard his formalities.

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Poetry and Drama. By T. S. ELIOT. Harvard University Press, 1951. Pp. [iii] + 44. \$1.50.

In this beautifully written, if somewhat oracular, essay Mr. Eliot wrestles with the problem of the dramatic medium. As the argument is not always easy to follow, I shall begin by trying to summarize what I take its drift to be.

In drama, which is different in this respect from poetry, the question of communication is paramount (p. 24). The test is dramatic relevance (p. 25). Nothing must get in the way of the audience's concentration upon the action (p. 10). It follows that the medium ought to be as inconspicuous as possible (p. 11). Prose normally fulfils this condition better today than verse. The average theater-goer tends to regard verse as "a wholly different language from that which he himself speaks" (p. 12). But the prose play is a limited form (p. 42). The expression of intense emotion is only possible in poetry (p. 15). In the long run, therefore, we cannot do without poetic drama. The first step towards its restoration must be "to accustom our audiences to verse to the point at which they will cease to be conscious of it" (p. 14). This is important because verse rhythm only attains its proper effect upon the hearers when they are not conscious of it (p. 15). Its function then is to guide and reinforce the emotional response (p. 19). This "unconscious effect of the verse upon us" (p. 21) is what differentiates poetic drama from the prose play and enables it, at its moments of greatest intensity, to "touch the border of those feelings which music only can express" (pp. 42-43).

It will be seen that the novelty of the argument lies in the rôle that Mr. Eliot assigns to verse rhythm. The audience's unconsciousness of its action must clearly be only relative. The rhythm is always susceptible apparently of critical analysis. If it were not, obviously it could not even be discussed. But if the rhythm is to do its work properly, its operations must normally remain somewhere on the fringes of consciousness, inconspicuously directing and underlining the audience's emotional responses. That at least is the thesis. Mr. Eliot

illustrates it by a detailed analysis of the opening scene in *Hamlet*, which Shakespearians will probably find the most interesting portion of the essay.

Mr. Eliot regards the first twenty-two lines of the scene as *transparent*. "You are consciously attending, not to the poetry, but to the meaning of the poetry. If you were hearing *Hamlet* for the first time, without knowing anything about the play, I do not think that it would occur to you to ask whether the speakers were speaking in verse or prose." Apparently the alleged transparency persists down to l.157. But from l.158 ("Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes") to l.167 ("Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill") "there is a deliberate brief emergence of the poetic into consciousness." This passage is said to provide a "resolution" of the earlier unconscious rhythms. Mr. Eliot is skating here on the thin ice of a musical metaphor. The scene began with twenty-two "brusque" lines, which changed to "a slower movement" at Marcellus's

Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy . . .

On the appearance of the Ghost "the movement changes again . . . into the solemn and sonorous." Horatio's words to the Ghost on its second appearance mark "an abrupt change to staccato." Finally the "rhythm changes again" with the words

We do it wrong, being so majestic . . .

Mr. Eliot sees in all these transitions "a kind of musical design . . . which reinforces and is one with the dramatic."

I am not sure that I find any of this very convincing. The iambic rhythms seem to be almost omnipresent. Even in the abrupt opening lines the blank verse surely hits one in the eye. Francisco is conscientiously decasyllabic:

Nay, answer me; stand and unfold yourself. . .
You come most carefully upon your hour. . .
For this relief much thanks; 'tis bitter cold. . .

And the transitions are certainly not primarily rhythmic. What follows the short exchanges of ll. 1-22 is longer speeches and longer sentences. If there is "a slower movement" here it derives from the syntactic change. And the change on the Ghost's appearance is not to a more solemn and sonorous rhythm, but to a more solemn and sonorous diction:

What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march?

It is equally misleading to describe Horatio's words on the Ghost's second appearance as a "staccato" passage. They are a solemn conjuration, deliberately formalized ("If thou hast . . . Speak to me: / If there be . . . Speak to me: / If thou art . . . O! speak. . ."). Similarly the change at l.143 is not rhythmic but from short words to polysyllables (*majestical, violence, invulnerable, malicious mockery*). To some extent, of course, the verbal and syntactical changes necessarily involve changes of rhythm. There needs no ghost come from the grave to tell us that long words and sentences cannot be spoken just like short words and sentences. But even Mr. Eliot cannot persuade me that this rhythmic shadow of the sense reinforces anything. When he adds that "It has checked

and accelerated the pulse of our emotion without our knowing it," one is tempted to resort to the *tu quoque*. How does *he* know it?

At the risk of seeming presumptuous I am tempted to wonder if Mr. Eliot has not misconceived the function of Shakespearian blank verse. The dialogue in *Hamlet* I.i, in addition to creating the illusion of real conversation, had to serve utilitarian purposes now delegated to the scene-painter, the lighting-manager, the stage-effects man, and the program. It had also to set the tone of the play—which meant, for the mature Shakespeare, an oblique announcement of his dramatic theme (the extended metaphor). To pack all this into realistic prose would have been impossible. With an aesthetic distance, however, imposed by the blank verse the audience could be persuaded to suspend its disbelief. This has enabled Shakespeare to tell us eleven times in the first forty lines, without any breach of the dramatic illusion, that it is night-time. We are also told several times over the names of all the speakers and their relationship to each other.¹ A more important injection is Francisco's "And I am sick at heart"—an irrelevant and unmotivated remark whose sole function is to introduce the tragic theme. All this is made possible by the blank verse, because of the continual reminder it provides that Shakespeare's stage-world is not quite the real world and that the laws it obeys are similar to rather than the same as ours. (A simple example is the stage hour which is telescoped into the thirty-four lines between Bernardo's announcement at l.7 that it has struck twelve and the Ghost's appearance at l.40 at one o'clock.) But one thing follows as a necessary consequence: the blank verse *must* be noticed. Unless the audience have realized that blank verse is being used, they will not have been immunized against the intrusion of common-sense criteria.

Similar objections seem to apply to the essay's more general conclusions. By a carefree juggling with his key terms—*poetry* and *verse*, *unconscious* (meaning either "conscious experiences that have been partly forgotten" or "subconscious feelings just emerging into consciousness"), *music* (used literally or metaphorically)—Mr. Eliot maintains an appearance of logical coherence. But it is often touch and go. What Mr. Archibald MacLeish meant when he described the essay, as he is said to have done in the blurb, as "the most important statement on poetry for the stage in this generation" I simply cannot imagine.

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Shakespeare Survey. An Annual Survey of Shakespearian Study & Production. 5. Edited by ALLARDYCE NICOLL. Cambridge University Press, 1952. Pp. viii + 164, 9 plates. \$3.00.

The latest volume in this annual series maintains the high standard of excellence that has been demonstrated in the preceding four volumes. Like its predecessors, it has something for everyone; but *Shakespeare Survey* 5 is not a grab bag of inconsequential trifles. The volume can be read from cover to cover with interest and pleasure by all Shakespearians. The general audience for whom the volume is intended does not preclude scholarly articles; the scholarship, however, is neither musty nor pedantic. The contributions of more

¹ This is partly a matter of the use of "you" and "thou". Bernardo is the social superior of Francisco ("get thee to bed, Francisco"), but the social inferior of Horatio whom he consistently addresses as "you." Marcellus and Horatio address each other as "thou"; they are presumably friends as well as social equals. It is perhaps worth noting that Horatio always addresses the Ghost as "thou." Hamlet does so too in I.v but not in III.iv. Had the confirmation provided by the play-scene promoted the Ghost from the sub-human to an authentic spirit of his father?

general interest, such as Christopher Fry's "Letters to an Actor Playing Hamlet," will please specialist and nonspecialist alike.

In recognition of the great contributions made in recent years by "the twin art and science of bibliography," this year's volume is focused on the subject of Shakespeare's text. In the lead article, Peter Alexander, fresh from his own recent one-volume edition of the complete works, presents an interesting, clear, and quite informative article on the editor's problems in general.

The most controversial article in this volume will surely be Alice Walker's "The 1622 Quarto and the First Folio Texts of *Othello*." In recent articles, Dr. Walker has attempted to prove, contrary to the generally accepted opinion, that the folio texts of 2 *Henry IV* and *Hamlet* were set from quartos that had been altered and corrected by reference to manuscripts in the possession of the folio editors. Now Dr. Walker would add *Othello* to this group. As in her previous articles, Dr. Walker relies mainly on the "twin errors" shared by the two texts. Her associate, the late R. B. McKerrow, long ago insisted that evidence of "twin errors" will rarely prove the dependence of one printed text upon another. Proof-positive that a later edition has been set from an earlier edition consists in demonstrating that the second edition reproduces abnormalities that had their origin in the shop where the first edition was printed. Abnormalities such as the peculiar spellings and recognizable idiosyncrasies of compositors can not have existed in any manuscript; their reappearance in a later edition proves the dependence of the later edition on the earlier. Such evidence Dr. Walker fails to produce, or even consider. Until such evidence is presented, the current view that the quarto and folio texts of *Othello* were independently printed from different manuscripts will probably prevail. Dr. Walker's article, however, makes interesting reading, and her startling conclusions will have the beneficial result of forcing others to reinvestigate these problems, using the latest techniques that have been developed in analytical bibliography.

In a second important textual article, Philip Edwards attempts to prove that the corrupt text of *Pericles* is a reconstruction "undertaken by two 'reporters'; the first responsible for the first two acts, the second for the last three." The article is a model of efficient and tight reasoning; if some of the *Pericles* problems remain obscure because of lack of evidence, the general conclusions presented here are sound.

Although this volume is primarily devoted to textual matters, criticism is not ignored, and one of the most fruitful of recent critical approaches, the analysis of imagery, is represented by two articles. R. A. Foakes argues convincingly for a distinction between poetic and dramatic imagery, concluding that "A discussion of dramatic imagery . . . would include reference to the subject-matter and object-matter of poetic imagery, to visual and auditory effects, iterative words, historical and geographical placing, and to both the general and particular uses of these things." Nicely complementing this general consideration of imagery is S. L. Bethell's study of the diabolic imagery in *Othello*, an article that suffers from the imprecision about which Mr. Foakes complains. In view of his subject, one wonders why the author fails to emphasize the fact, so important in the final scene, that Othello can wound but can not kill the "devil" Iago.

Among the other contributions, all worthy of individual consideration, are: Georges Bonnard's plea for a text designed for continental readers; H. M. Adams' pleasant survey of the rich Shakespeare holdings in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge; an article dealing with Shakespeare's influence on

Pushkin; and a survey of the performances of Shakespeare's plays on the Flemish stage.

The plates showing sets and scenes from the year's outstanding productions are all of interest; and, as a curiosity, the hitherto unpublished sketches made by George Vertue in 1737 of New Place (which had been razed in 1702) and the monument in the Stratford church are interesting, although the New Place sketch must have dubious authority. And finally, the reviews of the year's contributions to Shakespearian study—critical, historical, and textual—by J. I. M. Stewart, Clifford Leech, and James McManaway are full, useful, and good reading.

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PHILIP WILLIAMS

The Elizabethan Malady: a Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642. By LAWRENCE BABB. Michigan State College Press, East Lansing, 1951. Pp. [ix] + 206. \$3.50.

We now have the summing up for the defense in a long debate concerning the relevance of Renaissance psychology to the understanding of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. More than twenty-five years ago a group of American scholars stressed the careful use by the dramatists, and specifically by Shakespeare, of the terminology of this physiological psychology. Hardin Craig, Ruth L. Anderson, and Lily B. Campbell, among others, led the way, to be followed by a host of historically-minded scholars, including Theodore Spencer, O. J. Campbell, G. B. Harrison, John W. Draper, and the author of this volume in earlier studies. The description of physiological processes and symptoms came eventually to overshadow an interest in a psychology of the passions, the reason, and the will; and the pathology of the humors found celebrated cases in the dramatic presentation of melancholy in Shakespeare's day.

The new critics and the Freudians have not been alone in their contempt for this historical approach. Mr. Stoll with characteristic vigor has protested against "the disturbing intrusion of antiquarian learning," (*MLN.*, LIV [1939], 79-85) and Mrs. Louise Turner Forest, in a lively "Caveat for Critics" (*PMLA*, LXI [1946], 651-672) has more recently attacked this "erudite nonsense" and has sought to exorcise "this scholarly revenant by showing that it never had an actual Elizabethan original." She has asserted that "Elizabethan psychology was a chaotic jumble of ambiguous or contradictory fact and theory." The ghost, however, will not be laid: Mr. Babb, who has already acknowledged the justice of some of Mrs. Forest's sweeping generalizations (*Adams Memorial Studies*, pp. 515, 520) has now in this study, in spite of his disclaimer of controversy in the Preface, prepared a comprehensive reply.

More than a third of the book is a description of this physiological psychology and of the "scientific theory of melancholy." The remainder is a classification, with illustrations from Elizabethan and Jacobean literature, of the various melancholic types.

The author has successfully threaded his way through a maze of terms (souls, animal spirits, ventricles, humors, appetites, and the like) and a veritable labyrinth of conflicting descriptions to something which may be recognized as Elizabethan psychology. The diversities and contradictions over the period of sixty-two years covered by this study are no more serious obstacles to the description of this psychology than would be encountered in a comparable description covering as many years of Eighteenth-century empiricism or modern experimental psychology.

Any one familiar with the vast literature of melancholy from Bright to Burton is likely to understand Mr. Babb when he shares Burton's dismay as he sets out to "adventure through the midst of these perplexities." At one point, indeed, the author, close to agreeing with the "Caveat," remarks: "It looks somewhat as if melancholy embraces all irrationality." Leaving Burton bravely behind, however, he embarks upon a new "anatomy," distinguishing between natural melancholy and unnatural (for him synonymous with "adust"); and to these he adds "a disease (or genus of diseases) due to the presence of melancholy humor abnormal in quantity or quality," the melancholy "complexion." Even after the description of two species of the genus, the scholar's melancholy and hypochondria, it is difficult to distinguish this from the previously named variety. Confusion thickens when the author adds a "pathological" variety "hard to distinguish from the relatively normal condition of the man of melancholy complexion." If this apparently four-fold division reflects Elizabethan classification, the reader understands why Jaques assured Rosalind that he had a melancholy of his own "compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects." We are ready to agree with Mr. Babb: "Clearly the melancholy category is very indefinitely bounded."

In the midst of a third chapter on "Hallucination," a continuation of the pathology, one suddenly comes upon Section 5, introducing an altogether new melancholic called "Aristotelian" as opposed to the Galenic already described as "sluggish, dull, and blockish, fearful and sorrowful," subject to hallucination, often fallen to the level of the brute. To this unattractive specimen there is now opposed a creature emerging from one of the pseudo-Aristotelian problems: "Why is it that all who have become eminent in philosophy or politics or poetry or the arts are clearly of an atrabilious temperament?" Perhaps unduly under the influence of Panofsky's *Dürer*, Mr. Babb finds evidence in Ficino, Fracastoro, Vives, and others of a persistent tradition in the Renaissance of a witty melancholic who made his way into England.

This would be an extremely easy way out of the perplexities besetting Mr. Babb and the contradictions stressed by Mrs. Forest; one could account, for example, for a wit which should be cold and dry but turned out unaccountably to be hot and moist. It is doubtful, however, whether there was such a tradition, especially among English authorities, comparable in range, emphasis, and general familiarity, to the Galenic tradition. It is true that many from Bright to Burton knew about the problem, but, like the latter, they dismissed it with little discussion as involving a flat contradiction. It is arbitrary to assert: "There would have been no such duality . . . if there had been no Aristotelian problem, for this problem was the source of the idea that melancholy men are extraordinarily endowed" (p. 66). Since each type, we are told, "has an adequate basis in scientific lore," we expect both psychological description and ample illustration. In the theoretical portion the Aristotelian melancholic remains a paradox, at best explained by continental writers as a product of melancholy adust. Among the illustrations, to be sought in the malcontent types, one finds no dramatic characters who are melancholy because they are extraordinarily endowed or geniuses in virtue of melancholy. The Italianate traveler, who might have brought home with him some superficial notions derived from the academies, was responsible, not for a tradition with a basis in scientific lore, but for an affection which, if we accept Mr. Babb's account, made him the object of hearty dislike. He was derided by the satirists and eventually laughed off the stage. Along with his fellow-malcontents he hardly justifies the title of the last chapter, "The Dignity of Melancholy."

It is better to follow Burton, who in the midst of the "perplexity," after eight years spent in a careful study of the "authorities," made a vital distinction which Mr. Babb ignores: over against this Galenic account of melancholy in which the physiological states are causes and the psychological conditions effects, he summarizes a prevalent tradition accounting for melancholy in terms of disordered passion and *laesa imaginatio* in rebellion against reason. In this view the physical aberrations are at most concomitants and often only symptoms and effects. This tradition of the "Passions and Perturbations of the Mind" (see Part I, Sect. II, Memb. III) with fine impartiality he sets over against his account of "How the Body works on the Mind" (Memb. V). It is this former tradition of the passions and the imagination which more adequately explains the presence of sorrow and anger in the melancholic, and the rôle of the diseased imagination leading to madness.

When with Burton's help (and he has an abundance of authorities, some of whom Mr. Babb has ignored) we have rescued the melancholy man from the almost exclusive diagnosis of the physicians, we are better prepared for the examination of the literary examples as the Renaissance probably viewed them, as ethical types rather than case histories. It is true that Mr. Babb has on the whole avoided the modern pitfall, and only once (p. 118) has slipped into the familiar language; but the fact remains that both his method of classification and his examples from dramatic literature suggest the study of pathological cases rather than the psychological presentation of character as having ethical significance. This latter emphasis would have involved a Stoic influence which he has ignored.

If this distinction had been recognized, there would have been less difficulty in resolving any perplexity concerning love-melancholy. Shakespeare seems to puzzle the author, and he ends by calling him a "genial skeptic" (p. 171). Shakespeare, we may observe, was taking sides in a lively debate: "Tell me where is fancy bred, / Or in the heart or in the head," and, in all of the comedies save one, the answer is the same: in the eyes. The cure of love-melancholy is, therefore, not a purging of humors or the like, but a glance at other beauties. He never asks us, in Burton's phrase, to "break into the inner rooms, and rip up the antecedent immediate causes."

The reader is led to anticipate a classification of characters from literature approximating the scheme suggested by the first third of the volume: that various melancholics will correspond to the natural, unnatural, the genus of melancholy diseases, the pathological states, and the "Aristotelian" witty man. We find no corresponding scheme in the ordering of the examples. First come four types of malcontents: the melancholy traveler, the villain, the cynic, and finally the scholar. One may add that a disclaimer in the Preface of all controversy can hardly excuse the failure at this point to introduce, at least by way of footnotes, rival classifications such as that of Theodore Spencer (*Adams Memorial Studies*, pp. 523-535). After the malcontents come the examples of the pathology of grief and the psychopathic cases, with examples drawn mainly from plays after 1600. At this point the reader encounters Hamlet with his "morose brooding, his weary despondency, his suicidal impulses," and he seems to be in danger of becoming again, as with the Freudians, a case history. Suddenly, however, the author breaks off and with commendable candor writes: "There may be subtleties in Hamlet's personality and behavior which this concept cannot explain. It may be that a knowledge of human nature is more necessary to the understanding of Hamlet than a knowledge of Elizabethan melancholy" (p. 109). One applauds again the saving grace of a scholarship alive to the

dangers of a one-sided approach. It may, like the concessions of the "Caveat," seem at the moment to be a *nolo contendere*; but in the long run Mr. Babb will have gained in the confidence of fellow-scholars.

He would, I believe, have been among the first to recognize the wiser method of a ripe scholar, Hardin Craig, in a recent summary ("Shakespeare and Elizabethan Psychology: Status of the Subject," in *Shakespeare Studien: Festschrift für Heinrich Mutschmann*, Marburg, 1951), obviously not available when this study was completed. Mr. Craig distinguishes between the superficial use of a psychological terminology in the early dramatists (Kyd, Lyly, Peele, Greene, and Marlowe) and a growing emphasis upon abnormal psychology in Marston, Chapman, and Jonson, to be followed by Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster, Middleton, Massinger, and Ford, "absorbed in the spectacle of man in the grasp of unruly spirits and driven to insanity, crime, misery, intellectual blindness. . . ." If the present study had been influenced by such a generalization, it might have gained by adopting a more definitely chronological approach. In this shape it might have had greater value in providing the background for the understanding of single playwrights and separate plays. As it stands, it is a mine of information, the result of many months of patient research, and, on the whole, an effective reply to the critics.

MURRAY W. BUNDY

The State College of Washington

Shakespeare: El problema de su personalidad y su obra. By EMIL WOLFF. Mendoza: Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, 1950. Pp. 58.

With the carefully printed pamphlet bearing the foregoing title, the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo (of Mendoza, Argentina) inaugurates a series of Quarto Studies in English. The series, edited by Dr. Alfredo Dornheim, Director of the German and English sections of the University's Institute of Modern Languages and Literatures, proposes a double objective: to provide for those interested in English literature texts of important critical studies, in the original or translated; and to serve as a medium for the consideration of ultimate artistic values. At the end of each study, as in the present one, there is to appear a brief bio-bibliographical sketch of the "authority" whose work is presented.

It is fitting that such a series begin with a study of Shakespeare; and the able *Gedanken über das Shakespeareproblem* (1946) of the eminent Hamburg scholar, Professor Emil Wolff, here competently translated by three of Dr. Dornheim's research assistants, is a judicious selection. If English and American scholars are inclined to consider this a "back-door" entry to the study of English literature, they may hereby be reminded that, largely because of their own intransigent insularity, German scholarship still retains an intellectual ascendancy in the Argentine.

JOHN LEON LIEVSAY

University of Tennessee

Queries and Notes

HAMLET AND IN PARADISUM

By BROTHER BALDWIN PETER, F.S.C.

In the Roman Catholic services for the dead, the antiphon *In Paradisum* is sung by the choir as the body is carried out of the church, to the grave. In England this antiphon dates back at least to the time of Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury (d. 1089),¹ and was used during the Middle Ages² and the Renaissance.³

This antiphon reads:

In Paradisum deducant te Angeli; in tuo adventu suscipiant te Martyres,
et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Jerusalem. Chorus Angelorum te
suscipiat, et cum Lazaro quondam paupere aeternam habebas requiem.⁴

No commentator seems to have noted the similarity between this antiphon and *Hamlet* V. ii. 370-371:

Horatio: Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.

A comparison shows that

a) the same idea is expressed in both passages: the angels carrying the soul to heaven;⁵

¹ Cf. *Ex Statutis Lanfranci*, c.24. Found in Edmond Martène, *De Antiquis Ecclesiae Ritibus Libri Tres* (Antwerp, 1763-1764), IV ("De Antiquis Monachorum Ritibus," lib.v, cap.x), 255.

² Cf. (1) *Manuale et Processionale ad Usus Insignis Ecclesiae Eboracensis* (York Manual), The Publications of the Surtees Society, LXIII, 58. (2) *Ibid.* app. ("Manuale ad Usus Insignis Ecclesiae Sarum"), pp.59*,81*, 192*. (3) J. Wickham Legg, *The Sarum Missal Edited from Three Early Manuscripts* (Oxford, 1916), p.447.

³ "At the time of his [Henry VIII's] death, on January 28, 1547, the Services of the Church of England were still the Latin Services of the Salisbury [Sarum] Breviary, Missal, and Manual" (John Henry Blunt, D.D., *The Annotated Book of Common Prayer* [London, 1899], p.111 n).

Although the author of this article did not find this antiphon in *The Book of Common Prayer*, it was in all probability used in Elizabethan England:

The manner in which music was employed at burials in 1598 is best shown by the following extract from a book of that date:

It is a custome still in use with Christians, to attend the funerall of their deceased friendes, with whole chantries of choyce quire-men singing solemnly before them.

(*Shakespeare's England*, by P. Macquoid [Oxford, 1932], II, 150).

This seems to describe the traditional ceremony of the Catholic Church, consisting of the antiphon *In Paradisum* and Psalms CXIII and CXIV.

⁴ May the angels lead thee into Paradise; at thy coming may the martyrs receive thee, and bring thee into the holy city, Jerusalem. May the choir of angels receive thee, and with Lazarus, once a beggar, mayest thou have eternal rest.

⁵ The idea of angelic convoy or conveyance to heaven is not novel in literature. Cf. Luke xvi. 22. Christian art from earliest times has depicted it. This thought is repeated several times throughout the liturgy of the dead. The particular form in Shakespeare, however, links it with *In Paradisum*.

- b) both are expressed in the form of a wish: "May the angels lead" (deducant, perducant, suscipiat); "may" is understood in Shakespeare;
- c) in both, the soul is directly addressed: the choir addresses the deceased; Horatio addresses the dead Hamlet;
- d) also, the deceased is addressed at the time of departing: as the body is borne to the grave; as Hamlet dies and is soon to be carried offstage.

The word "rest," which ends Shakespeare's line, corresponds exactly to the word "requiem," which ends the antiphon and which is often used to denote Paradise.

The predicate form "sing thee to thy rest" also bears resemblance to the expression "Chorus Angelorum te suscipiat": the heavenly reception marked by the music of angels.⁶ Shakespeare's words intend the action of conducting or conveying by means of singing or accompanied by singing. This also recalls the fact that a choir, singing psalms and *In Paradisum*, accompanied the body to the church and the grave ("sing thee to thy rest").

The two passages compared present a striking similarity and suggest that Shakespeare was familiar with this portion of the burial liturgy, using it consciously or subconsciously.⁷

⁶ It is interesting to find "choires of angels [sing thee to thy rest]" in Q 1676 (the Actors' Q), which corresponds to "Chorus Angelorum [te suscipiat]" in the antiphon. Cf. Furness, I, 454.

⁷ This does not necessarily imply that Shakespeare was using the Catholic rite as such, since, in some cases, the rites of the Church of England at this period seem to have differed little from pre-Reformation rites. Cf. *Shakespeare's England*, p. 148; D. Wilson, *What Happens in Hamlet*, app. B.

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THE PICTURES IN *HAMLET* III. iv: A POSSIBLE CONTEMPORARY REFERENCE

By FREDSON BOWERS

When Hamlet at III. iv. 53 ff. orders Gertrude, "Looke heere vpon this Picture, and on this," stage tradition has usually provided him with two miniatures, one his own and one Gertrude's; with two portraits hanging on the walls of the chamber; with a miniature and a hanging portrait; or has economically assigned the representations to the mind's eye.

A possible contemporary reference may assist us to reconstruct how the scene was managed on the stage of the Globe.

The references to "Hamlet Revenge" and Paris Garden in Thomas Dekker's *Satiromastix* (late 1601) have been known for some time, but another possible allusion seems to have gone unnoticed. In the final scene of the play, a satire on Ben Jonson and a reply to his *Poetaster*, Horace (Jonson) and his gull Asinius Bubo are exposed and sentenced. The stage direction reads,¹ "*Enter Tucca, his boy after him with two pictures vnder his cloake. . .*" Much horse-play ensues in which Horace is crowned with a wreath of nettles and is stripped

¹ The text is taken from my forthcoming edition of the plays of Dekker. The scene may be consulted most readily in *Poetaster and Satiromastix*, ed. J. H. Penniman (Belles Lettres Series, 1913), pp. 383, 388. The text of *Hamlet* is quoted from Q2.

of his satyr's garb. There follows a long speech by Tucca, who now makes use of the pictures, representing Jonson and the Roman Horace whose name he has taken as a usurper. I quote the pertinent words:

thou hast no part of *Horace* in thee but's name, and his damnable vices: thou hast such a terrible mouth, that thy beard's afraide to peepe out: but, looke heere you staring Leuiathan, heere's the sweete visage of *Horace*; looke perboyld-face, looke; *Horace* had a trim long-beard, and a reasonable good face for a Poet, (as faces goe now-a-days). . . . *Horace* had not his face punctt full of Oylet-holes, like the couer of a warming-pan: *Horace* lou'd Poets well, and gaue Coxcombes to none but fooles; but thou lou'st none, neither Wisemen nor fooles, but thy selfe: *Horace* was a goodly Corpulent Gentleman, and not so leane a hollow-cheekt Scrag as thou art: No, heere's the Coppy of thy countenance, by this will I learne to make a number of villanous faces more, and to looke scuriously vpon'th world, as thou dost.

In the nature of the case, demonstration is impossible that this episode is supposed to reflect the one in *Hamlet*, but several suggestions may be offered. *Satiromastix* is packed full of theatrical allusions, chiefly placed in Tucca's mouth, and there has already been one reference to *Hamlet*. There is nothing in *Poetaster* which would make these pictures a reversal of an incident in that play or would refer to it in any way. Tucca is quite capable of exposing Jonson's pretensions without the aid of these properties. The pictures, in fact, depend for their effect upon a frame of reference familiar to the audience, such as the scene in *Hamlet* where the picture of a hard-favored living usurper is placed against that of a handsome dead man whom he has displaced in office. The situation itself is the thing, not any verbal resemblances, which under the circumstances cannot be expected. But one may set against "See what grace was seated on this browe, *Hyperions* curls, the front of *Ioue* himselfe," the description of Horace, "heere's the sweete visage of *Horace*. . . . *Horace* had a trim long-beard, and a reasonable good face for a Poet." Or "A combination and a forme indeede, Where euery God did seeme to set his seale," against "*Horace* was a goodly Corpulent Gentleman." Or "Heere is your husband like a mildewed eare, Blasting his wholesome brother" against "not so leane a hollow-cheekt Scrag as thou art: No, heere's the Coppy of thy countenance, by this will I learne to make a number of villanous faces more." But the hits on Jonson's appearance would be expected to obscure any attempt at specific verbal parody, which is sufficiently satisfied by the exhibition of the two pictures and the pointing to the good countenance of the one and the ill countenance of the other.

The lack of any source or parallel to the comparison of two men from their pictures in *Satiromastix*, save in *Hamlet*, leads to the strong possibility that in Dekker's allusive play he has borrowed a sensational episode from Shakespeare. If so, the bringing in of the pictures under the boy's coat shows that portraits of some size were exhibited. In turn, this would seem to be a comic exaggeration of a scene in *Hamlet* in which miniatures were carried rather than fixed portraits hung on the walls of the inner study or chamber.

University of Virginia

THE APOTHECARY'S HOLIDAY

By RALPH WATERBURY CONDEE

(Romeo and Juliet V. i. 37-57)

Romeo: I do remember an apothecary,—
 And hereabouts 'a dwells. . . .
 As I remember, this should be the house.
 Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.
 What, ho! apothecary!

Enter Apothecary
Apothecary: Who calls so loud?

The apothecary's holiday is a small but puzzling point, the explanation for which reveals a minor difficulty Shakespeare seems to have encountered in his stagecraft. Although the action of *Romeo and Juliet* take place shortly before Lammas-tide (August 1), this fact is stated in such vague terms that the calendar could not be an excuse for the holiday; nor is there any necessity in the plot for the holiday.

The explanation is that Shakespeare needed an excuse to keep the action—the meeting of Romeo and the apothecary—out on the Platform instead of letting it move to the Study, as we would ordinarily expect. For a usual handling of a similar situation, see II. iii: Friar Lawrence is in his cell (the Study) when Romeo enters to the Platform. When Romeo enters the Friar's cell, he presumably goes to the back of the Platform and into the Study. So in the apothecary scene, we might expect Romeo to move from the Platform to the Study in order to enter the apothecary's shop. The difficulty Shakespeare encountered was caused by the fact that the next scene, V. ii, is in Friar Lawrence's cell, and would presumably be located where Shakespeare seems always to locate the Friar's cell—in the Study. Therefore all the props to be used in the Friar's cell must be already in place during Romeo's conversation with the apothecary in scene one. Since these would be inappropriate to an apothecary's shop, Romeo and the apothecary must be kept out of the Study. So Shakespeare closed the apothecary's shop and gave him a holiday.

The Pennsylvania State College

TWO NOTES ON *I HENRY IV*

By HENRY H. ADAMS

I. In the scene in the Boar's Head Tavern in which both Falstaff and Hal indulge in play-acting, each takes his turn at playing the part of Hal's father. Falstaff has the first chance at it, and at the end of his performance, Hal says to him, "Dost thou speak like a king? Do thou stand for me, and I'll play my father." Falstaff's answer is: "Depose me? if thou dost it half so gravely, so majestically, both in word and matter, hang me up by the heels for a rabbit-

sucker, or a poulter's hare."¹ This outrageous reply has escaped general notice, yet it reveals the consummate self-assurance Falstaff possesses in his relations with Hal. What other man in England would dare to joke of deposition with the Prince of Wales, the son of Henry IV? To make the joke even more telling, Falstaff has just been playing the rôle of that king, who at that very moment is facing a rebellion to depose him; and to cap the climax, Hal is now "ascending the throne" as Henry, and his first act, as Falstaff points out, is to depose his predecessor. In this scene Sir John is playing with fire.

II. In addressing the Percy faction for the first time in the play, King Henry accuses himself of weakness in his dealings with them.

My blood hath been too cold and temperate,
Unapt to stir at these indignities,
And you have found me—for accordingly
You tread upon my patience. But be sure
I will from henceforth rather be myself
Mighty and to be feared, than my condition,
Which hath been smooth as oil, soft as young down,
And therefore lost that title of respect
Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud.

(I. iii. 1-9)

It is perfectly obvious that Henry is here contrasting his official self as king with his "condition" as a man, friendly, open, easy-going toward his friends and all men. Now, he says, I will be "myself," a word which can only apply to his function as king. In other words, he is saying that he will live up to the generally understood *type* of king, the powerful ruler who is "mighty and to be feared." In discussions and editions of this play, the word "condition" is generally glossed, but I have been unable to find any discussion of "myself" in this particular meaning.

Once we have established "myself" from the scene just noted, we can note another example of its use in the same framework of meaning. In the reconciliation scene between Hal and his father, at the point where Henry accuses Hal of having been too much with the base crowd, Hal's answer is nearly an echo of the speech of his father already noted.

I shall hereafter, my thrice gracious lord,
Be more myself.

(III. ii. 92-93)

Critics who have considered this too weak an answer for Hal to make at this point have not appreciated the special meaning Shakespeare intended the word to carry.

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¹ *Henry IV* II. iv. 478-481. All references are to *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. G. L. Kittredge.

A NORWEGIAN OPERATIC CYMBELINE

By KRISTIAN SMIDT

The success that rewarded the composer and performers of the new opera *Cymbeline* in Oslo last December is a tribute to the enduring power of Shakespearian drama to inspire kindred arts. "All my life I have been looking for good opera subjects," said Arne Eggen to reporters. His first opera was based on Ibsen's legend-play *Olav Liljekrans*, and no doubt it was partly its legendary quality that attracted him to *Cymbeline* too. He was at work on the opera for several years, using as his immediate text Henrik Rytter's sensitive translation into the dialect-based "New Norse." Mr. Eggen has remained as faithful as possible to Shakespeare while omitting and concentrating for the purposes of his opera (thus the long second part of his third act contains most of the original fourth and fifth acts). His music was found to be alive with Shakespeare's tenderness and passion. It is neither "radical" nor experimental. In its general pattern it is in the Verdi tradition. In style it has suggestions all along of early English music, especially in the famous dirge of the original fourth act, which is considered to be one of the musical peaks of this opera. Though Mr. Eggen remains on the whole romantically conservative, however, expert opinion emphasizes the decided originality of his work both in outline and quality. It may be added that the production, in Oslo's Nationaltheater, seems to have established the reputation of its Imogen, Aase Nordmo Løvberg, as an opera singer of outstanding merit. The success of the whole venture is the more remarkable as Norway has no permanent opera, and Mr. Eggen is the only Norwegian composer now alive who has had operas performed.

A NOTE ON MISS NOSSITER

By CHARLES BEECHER HOGAN

In the January 1952 issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly* Mr. Stone identified the author of the *Letter to Miss Nossiter*, 1753. I am now able to make a brief identification of Miss Nossiter herself.

She was born about 1735,¹ and was christened Maria Isabella. The details of her early life remain obscure; it is known only that she became Spranger Barry's mistress, and presently his pupil.² Barry introduced her to the public on 10 October 1753 as Juliet, he himself playing Romeo. In the course of the season she acted this part seventeen times. She was seen also as Belvidera in *Venice Preserved* (Otway), as Rutland in *The Earl of Essex* (Brooke), as

¹ When she made her debut in 1753 she was reported to have been eighteen years old (*The Monthly Mirror*, November 1801, p.334).

² Whether at this time the first Mrs. Barry was alive I do not know. Little has come to light about Barry's immediate family. By his wife, Anne, he had a son, Spranger, who was baptized at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, on 10 August 1748. He had another son, Thomas, who appeared briefly on the stage both in Dublin and London, and who died in Dublin in April 1768 (*The Public Advertiser*, 19 April 1768). In the course of the following summer Barry married his second wife, the famous Mrs. Dancer, who, after Barry's death in 1777, became Mrs. Crawford.

Philoclea in a new tragedy of that name by her champion, MacNamara Morgan, and as Perdita in Morgan's rifacimento of *The Winter's Tale*.

The following season Barry took her with him to Dublin, and she was not seen again in London until 12 December 1755, when at Covent Garden she acted Monimia in *The Orphan* (Otway). She appeared presently as Cordelia and as Desdemona. The next season, that of 1756-1757, she seems not to have been in great demand, and in 1757-1758 she was not engaged at all. Genest³ refers to the fact that "the more she was seen, the more she lost ground." This remark is not altogether substantiated by the playbills. In 1758-1759, her last season on the stage, she was seen in a few second-lead parts, such as Edging in *The Careless Husband* (Cibber) and Dorinda in *The Beaux' Stratagem* (Farquhar). But she continued to play frequently, and to play leading parts as well: Zara in *The Mourning Bride* (Congreve), Alicia in *Jane Shore* (Rowe), Miranda in *The Busy Body* (Centlivre).⁴ Failing health may have impaired her powers, but she acted regularly until ten days before her death. On 18 April 1759 she appeared as Aurelia in *The Prophetess* (Beaumont and Fletcher).⁵ *The Public Advertiser* of 30 April carries a brief notice to the effect that she died on the 28th, in Bedford Street. I have been unable to ascertain where she is buried.

It may be assumed that Miss Nossiter's relations with Barry were not what they had once been. In this final season of her acting he was not in London. With his partner, Henry Woodward, he had opened, on 23 October 1758, his new Dublin theater, in Crow Street. But Miss Nossiter was either not invited to join the company there, or she had refused to join it. In the early days of her career she had almost never walked out before the footlights unless Barry did likewise, and the inference as to her absence from Crow Street—to the building cost of which she had contributed—is reasonably clear.

It seems unlikely, however, from the evidence of her will, that Barry and Miss Nossiter had become permanently estranged. This document, now in Somerset House [Arran 277], is dated 28 August 1758.⁶ In it she returns to Barry for his "absolute use and benefit" an eighth part or share of the moiety of the clear profits in Crow Street theatre. This share had originally been assigned to her upon a payment to Barry of two hundred pounds and other considerations. The indenture of this assignment was also returned to him. To her brother, George Robert Nossiter, she bequeathed fifty pounds; to her maid, some clothes. Everything else went to Barry: money, bonds, securities, jewelry, furniture, linen, and personal estate. Lowe⁷ says that the total amount was three thousand pounds. What his authority is I do not know.

Yale University

³ John Genest, *English Stage*, IV, 393.

⁴ Her last appearance in a play by Shakespeare was in *Romeo and Juliet* on 23 May 1757.

⁵ Mr. Stone has been good enough to ascertain for me the details of her last appearances on the stage.

⁶ For her kindness in investigating the will and in reporting its contents to me I am indebted to Miss Sybil Rosenfeld.

⁷ Robert W. Lowe, *A Bibliographical Account of English Theatrical Literature*, p.249.

Notes and Comments

THE HOFSTRA COLLEGE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

The third annual Shakespeare Festival of Hofstra College was held from 2 to 6 April. Five performances of *Twelfth Night* by the Green Wig Society were given on the reconstruction of the Globe stage in Calkins Hall. The production, under the direction of Bernard Beckermann, starred Miss Stella Andrew as Viola. On Friday, 4 April, scenes from Shakespeare were performed by dramatic societies of Long Island high schools, a memorable experience for all the young actors and actresses. Professor Raymond W. Short presided over a symposium on Shakespeare's drama and stage, in which the other participants were President John Cranford Adams of Hofstra and Miss Marchette Chute, author of *Shakespeare of London*.



THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

From 14 April to 3 May, the University of Miami held its second annual Shakespeare Festival. The Drama Department gave performances of *Romeo and Juliet* and of *The Taming of the Shrew*. The production of *Romeo* was based on the Good Quarto 2, with some dependence (I. ii. 57 - I. iii. 36) on Bad Quarto 1. After the opening, it was found helpful to do a little cutting of the text because of a problem of diction. The best running time for the uncut text was three hours and fourteen minutes. The Folio text of *Shrew* was supplemented by the epilogue from the 1594 quarto of *A Shrew*. Stage business was derived as much as possible from the earliest editions, on the assumption that their stage directions represented, to some degree at least, Elizabethan performances. The platform was used for all scenes except where textual evidence or continuity of action necessitated the employment of the inner or upper stages.

Other features were a semi-popular lecture on Shakespeare's language by Professor Thomas Pyles of the University of Florida; an Elizabethan concert by the School of Music; an illustrated lecture on Elizabethan art by the Art Department; an Elizabethan dance concert by the Department of Physical Education; interdepartmental symposia relating to certain aspects of Shakespeare and his age; and motion pictures of Shakespeare plays on the campus and in the local theaters.

The following papers were read:

Professor Carmen Rogers, Florida State University: "Heavenly Justice in Shakespeare's Tragedies"

Professor John Long, Morehead State Teachers College: "Music for the Replica Staging of Shakespeare"

Professor Robert West, University of Georgia: "Rationalism in the Literature of Witchcraft in the Time of Shakespeare"

Professor John E. Uhler, Louisiana State University: "*Julius Caesar*: a Morality of *Respublica*"

Professor Edd W. Parks, University of Georgia: "Simms's Edition of the Shakespeare Apocrypha"

Professor Ants Oras, University of Florida: "Sound, Rhyme, and Lyricism in Marlowe: a Step toward Shakespeare"

Professor Fredson Bowers, University of Virginia: "A Definitive Text of Shakespeare: Problems and Methods"

Professor Allan Gilbert, Duke University: "Irony and Patriotism in *Henry V*"

Professor Josephine A. Pearce, University of Missouri: "Constituent Elements in Shakespeare's History Plays"

Professor Paul Siegel, Ripon College: "Shylock and the Puritan Usurers"

Professor Paul Parnell, New York University (*in absentia*): "The Characters of Goneril and Regan"

Professor Clark Emery, Miami University: "'The Extasie' Reconsidered"

Professor J. Max Patrick, University of Florida: "The Problem of Ophelia"

(Report contributed by Professor Arthur D. Matthews of the University of Miami)



SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHDAY

On 23 April, there were celebrations in many lands in honor of William Shakespeare. Only a few have been reported to *Shakespeare Quarterly*. It is hoped that next year programs of national, state, and local organizations may be received before the end of April, for inclusion in the July issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly*.

At the Folger Shakespeare Library, William Hess, tenor, and Blanche Winogron, on the virginals, assisted by Sydney Beck, viola da gamba, presented a program of music of Shakespeare's day, including contemporary settings of "It was a lover and his lass," "O mistress mine," "Farewell, dear love," and "Full fathom five."

The Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum of Columbia University celebrated the centennial of the founder's birth by opening a special Shakespeare exhibit on 23 April. It featured a production-design of the Globe stage, showing a rehearsal of *Julius Caesar* in 1599. Mr. Frances Malek, the designer, has aimed at historical accuracy in the architecture and also in all the decorations. Shakespeare is represented directing a scene between Caesar and Calpurnia. The curtain is a "cloth of Rome," of the sort mentioned in the Henslowe papers. The figures, by John Heldabrand, the actor, are the result of careful studies of costume and gesture. The museum, located in Room 412 Low Library, is open to visitors, Mondays through Fridays, from two to five throughout the regular academic terms.

The Shakespeare Club of New York City, of which Charles Warburton is president, held its annual reception and dinner on 20 April at the National Arts Club. Clarence Derwent served as master of ceremonies. After the rendition of Shakespearian songs by Judith Doniger, soprano, and the presentation

of "Romeo and Juliet—a Satire," by Beverly Tassoni, a member of the cast of *Guys and Dolls*, Dr. John H. H. Lyon, Honorary President, presented the third annual awards for "Meritorious Service in the Shakespeare Theatre" to Walter Hampden and to Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh (Lady Olivier). The Mimes and Mumpers of Fordham University, which under the direction of Edgar L. Kloten, won the 1951 Play Festival of Jesuit Colleges, performed "A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus and his love Thisbe."

The one hundredth annual dinner of the Shakspeare Society of Philadelphia was given at the home of Horace Howard Furness Jayne. Something will be forthcoming at a later date about the history of this remarkable organization.

In Toronto, Canada, the Shakespeare Society held its twenty-fourth annual Birthday dinner. Its president, Stanley K. Clark, M.D., sent official greetings and felicitations to the Shakespeare Association of America.

At Evansville, Indiana, the printing firm of Herbert W. Simpson Inc. continued its customary publication of a folder in honor of Shakespeare's birth. This year it took the form of a quotation from *Measure for Measure* (I. i. 30-44) set in Caslon types, a reproduction of the Droeshout engraving in the First Folio, and a quotation from Christopher Morley's *Shakespeare in Hawaii*.

The Morley College Players performed *The Comedy of Errors* in an Edwardian version in what should have been the yard of the Shakespearian George Inn in Southwark. Today only a portion of the inn remains, and the yard is now a railway yard. Luckily, and unbelievably, it made a fine theater. The long loading platform, where freight is loaded and unloaded in business hours, became a vast stage, entirely suitable for the composite set which any production of the play requires. In one corner was Antipholus' house; in another, the Goldsmith's shop; in another, the Abbey; in another, the Porcupine Inn. It was, as intended, a small village, and the whole production brilliantly brought out the life of its inhabitants. Edwardian policemen, street photographers, postcard sellers, and barrow boys mingled harmoniously with Shakespeare's characters. The production brought to mind the rich Shakespearian associations of Southwark, where stood the Globe, the Swan, the Rose, and also the Marshalsea prison.



THE SOUTHEASTERN RENAISSANCE CONFERENCE

The ninth annual meeting of the Southeastern Renaissance Conference was held at Duke University on 18 and 19 April. The committee in charge, consisting of Professors Allan Gilbert of Duke University, Macon Cheek, Ernest W. Talbert, and William Wells of the University of North Carolina, and Philip Williams of Duke University, presented a full program of papers and a delightful performance of madrigals by the Duke University Madrigal Singers under the direction of Eugenia C. Saville. The following papers of Shakespearian interest were read:

Professor Hennig Cohen, University of South Carolina: "Shakespeare in Charleston on the Eve of the Revolution"

Mr. Donald K. Anderson, Jr., Duke University: "Shakespeare's Use of Plutarch in *Julius Caesar*"

Miss Marilyn Williamson, Duke University: "History and Fiction in *Macbeth*"

Dr. James G. McManaway, Folger Shakespeare Library: "A Neglected French Criticism of Shakespeare"

Miss Virginia King, Duke University: "Shakespeare's Use of his Sources in *The Comedy of Errors*"

Professor B. L. Ullman, University of North Carolina: "Renaissance: The Word and the Underlying Concept"

Professor Don C. Allen, Johns Hopkins University: "Shakespeare: The Dream and the Miracle"



THE 1952 SEASON AT STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

Four plays by Shakespeare have been chosen for performance this year: *Coriolanus*, *Tempest*, *As You Like It*, and *Macbeth*. The fifth play, to round out the program, is Ben Jonson's *Volpone*. The Director of the Memorial Theatre, Anthony Quayle, who has produced eight plays since 1948, is this year acting only. Two of the plays, *Coriolanus* and *As You Like It*, are productions of Glen Byam Shaw. *The Tempest* is a revival of Michael Benthall's production. And John Gielgud is producing *Macbeth*. *Volpone* is produced by George Devine.

In preparation for the next three years, Anthony Quayle has announced the appointment of Glen Byam Shaw as joint director.

A 34-week Australasian tour will take place shortly after the close of the present Stratford season on the first of November. Two companies are now being formed, one to play the 8-month season at Stratford in 1953, and the other, headed by Anthony Quayle, to visit Australia and New Zealand. The plays to be taken to Australasia are *Othello*, *1 Henry IV*, and *As You Like It*.

There are some prospects of a tour of the United States and Canada in 1954.



SHAKESPEARE AT THE BRATTLE THEATRE

During the past season the Brattle Theatre of Cambridge, Massachusetts, presented *2 Henry IV* and *Love's Labor's Lost*, two seldom performed plays.

In *2 Henry IV*, the actors and the director, Albert Marre, caught the spirit of the drama, and, through excellent use of the small stage, made one forget the loose structure of the play. From the moment Rumor, attired in motley, delivered the prologue to the downfall of Falstaff, the tempo was excellent, and the juxtaposition of the bawdy tavern scenes and the moving speeches of King Henry created no disharmonious effect. In fact, the two planes of society, and moral outlook, with only Prince Hal moving between, made the rejection of Falstaff and the assumption of regal responsibilities a completely plausible experience.

The acting was outstanding. Jerry Kilty, who played the Fool in last year's

King Lear, was excellent as Falstaff. His quick wit and endless invention, his pompous diction, his bravado after his rejection—all were highly persuasive. Equally effective was Thayer David as King Henry, for he brought pathos and dignity to the part and was deeply moving in the speech ending, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." And in the tavern episodes Doll Tearsheet and Mistress Quickly, as played by Jan Farrand and Priscilla Morrill, were appropriately earthy and coarse. The scenes in which Shallow and Silence appear were especially delightful. Attired in authentic Elizabethan head-gear, Robert Fletcher was hilarious as the repetitive, garrulous Shallow, and Fred Gwynn as the taciturn Silence was amusing, especially when he broke forth in song. The other members of the large cast contributed effectively to a splendid performance.

For *Love's Labor's Lost* the company disregarded topical satire and transferred the action to Victorian England, to a garden replete with saccharine statuary and a highly decorative arbor. The male actors wore student apparel, and the entourage of the Princess appeared in riding habits and Victorian frocks. Although such a metamorphosis was novel, the changes were hardly satisfactory. Too frequently laughter was produced by such acts as the cloaking of a nude Cupid, a game of croquet in which Holofernes cheated his opponents, the spectacle of Sir Nathaniel riding a bicycle of that period, and the smoking of cigarets by the Princess and her companions when their guardian was absent. In other words, the play itself was not the thing; the Victorian antics inserted for this performance diverted. One could not help feeling that *Patience* was the play for the occasion.

In addition, the actors lacked the stylization necessary for this comedy. The males were simply clever, if somewhat ridiculous, college students, and the women foolish members of the social register. Sentimentality, particularly in the Barrymoresque depiction of Armado, also marred the total effect. Since this comedy is admittedly difficult to stage for modern audiences, one must remain grateful for this production. In fairness it should be added that the audience appeared to enjoy Shakespeare in Victorian dress.

(Reported by Professor Edwin Haviland Miller of Simmons College.)



The Toronto Summer Shakespeare Festival opened this year on June 30 with *Julius Caesar*. Performances take place in the Trinity College Quadrangle. The rôle of Brutus is being played by Douglas Ney, winner of the "best actor" award in the regional drama festival. The run will continue until 26 July.

Shakespeare on the Academic Stage

The Taming of the Shrew was presented from 29 April through 1 May by the MASK AND BAUBLE PLAYERS of GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY. Anthony Manzi directed the production. The program makes grateful acknowledgment of the assistance of the Class in Scene Designing of the College of William and Mary and of the Caps and Capers Dramatic Society of the Georgetown School of Nursing.



On 14, 16, and 17 February, the UNIVERSITY PLAYERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MALTA presented *Hamlet* under the distinguished patronage of H. E. Sir Gerald Creasy. The program names no director, but the theatrical reviewer of the *Times of Malta* (15 Feb. 1952) observes that though "Professor [Arthur Colby] Sprague [of Bryn Mawr] waives away the title of producer, . . . it is obvious that a distinguished mind has directed the progress of the play. Much of the credit is due to Mr. Serracino-Inglott and Mr. Flamini-Philcox, who not only played Polonius and Hamlet but had a main hand in the production."



At the University of Texas, the sixth annual Shakespeare production under the direction of B. Iden Payne was *Henry IV. Part 1* and *Part 2* were presented on alternate nights, probably for the first time by an academic group. The stage of Hogg Auditorium was converted to resemble that of the Globe. All the cast wore historically accurate costumes, designed by Miss Lucy Barton of the Drama Department. The casts of the two Parts are so large that all members of the DRAMA DEPARTMENT were required, and the armies of extras had to be recruited from the general student body. The run extended from 22 to 29 April.

Shakespeare Clubs and Study Groups

THE SHAKESPEARE CLUB OF CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE, which has held membership for more than a year in the Shakespeare Association of America, was founded in 1881, incorporated in 1883, and has been in continued existence since that date. There are sixteen active members who meet bimonthly, Monday afternoons, November to April, at three o'clock in the Shakespeare Room of the Concord Public Library. The works of Shakespeare—the plays and sonnets—are read in rotation. The present officers are Mrs. Thomas Marble, President; Miss Maud Forrest, Vice President; and Miss Elizabeth Stearns, Secretary-Treasurer.



THE SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY OF TORONTO reports growth in membership and in interest during the past year and encouraging prospects for the year to come. The officers for 1951-1952 include: Stanley K. Clark, M.D., President; Mr. Walter G. Frisby, Immediate Past President; Mr. F. A. Dashwood, Vice President; Mr. Richard Mudge, Treasurer; Mrs. Richard Mudge, Recording Secretary; Miss Esther Lunner, Membership Secretary; Miss Dorothy Wintersgill and Professor J. W. Scriven, Press Secretaries; Miss Vera Butcher, Music Convener; Mr. S. B. Pattison, Chairman, Drama Committee; Miss Elsie Keefer, Chairman, Ladies' Committee; and Mrs. Norman MacLean, Co-Chairman, Ladies' Committee.



In May, the SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY OF NEW YORK CITY elected as its President Judge Francis X. Giaconne, late of the Supreme Court of the State of New York. The Vice Presidents are Jose Ferrer, Arthur Heine, and David Houston.

Report of the Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America, Inc., was held on May 7, 1952, at the Grolier Club, 47 East 60th St., New York, New York. Sixteen members were present and three hundred and three were represented by proxy.

Mr. Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., President, conducted the meeting. Mr. John F. Fleming, Secretary-Treasurer, reported on the membership and the financial condition of the Association. It was noted that we have lost 63 members since the last annual meeting; this was undoubtedly attributable to the advance in membership dues from \$3.00 to \$5.00. It was decided that every effort should be made to increase the present membership to a point where the organization will be self-sustaining. A Committee has been appointed to make an extensive study and report its recommendations to the Board of Directors.

The Directors' goal is that the Association shall soon become self-sustaining and not dependent upon special gifts by interested friends.

The Auditing Committee, headed by Mr. Frederick B. Adams, Jr., presented their report, which was accepted as read. The Treasurer's report showed that the expenses had been greater than the income but that through special gifts the solvency of the Association has been maintained.

At the Directors' meeting, which convened immediately after the meeting of the members, Dr. James G. McManaway was elected to the Board of Directors in place of the late Professor Robert M. Smith. The other Directors were re-elected to serve for the ensuing year. The Advisory Board were re-elected, and Dr. William T. Hastings of Brown University was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Board. Dr. Harold S. Wilson, of the University of Toronto, was unanimously elected to the Editorial Board to fill the vacancy created by the death of Dr. Smith. Dr. Sidney Thomas was again named Bibliographer, and Mr. John B. Askling was appointed Indexer.

The late Professor Robert M. Smith was extolled by the members and in particular by Dr. McManaway for his unceasing efforts in behalf of our publication. A resolution was unanimously adopted, giving in detail the distinguished contributions of Professor Smith both as an officer and as a contributor to the *Quarterly*.

Dr. McManaway was warmly complimented on his outstanding success as editor and was assured by the Board of Directors that they would make every effort to assist him in furthering the cause of the Shakespeare Association of America, Inc.

Contributors

Dr. HENRY H. ADAMS is a member of the Department of English, History, and Government at the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. He is the author of many articles about John Dryden and other literary figures of the seventeenth century.

Professor THOMAS WHITFIELD BALDWIN, of the University of Illinois, a member of the Advisory Board of the Shakespeare Association, needs no introduction. He contributed a review to the April 1952 issue of *SQ*.

Brother BALDWIN PETER, F.S.C., serves on the staff of St. Mary's High School, Waltham, Massachusetts.

Professor ROBERT HAMILTON BALL, Chairman of the Department of English at Queens College, Long Island, is the author of *The Amazing Career of Sir Charles Overreach*. With the aid of a Guggenheim Fellowship, he has been writing the history of Shakespeare in the films.

FREDERICK WILSE BATESON, Lecturer in English at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, is the distinguished editor of the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* and of *Essays in Criticism*. He is the author of *English Comic Drama, 1700-1750*, and other books.

Professor MURRAY W. BUNDY of State College, Washington, will be remembered gratefully as the author of "A Record of Edwin Booth's Hamlet" in the April 1951 issue of *SQ*.

CHARLES PHILIP BUTCHER, Assistant Professor of English at Morgan State College, Baltimore, is on leave to continue his studies by virtue of an Opportunity Fellowship from the John Hay Whitney Foundation.

Dr. RALPH WATERBURY CONDEE is Assistant Professor of English at Pennsylvania State College, after having served for nearly four years in the Navy during World War II. His most recent publication discussed the formalized openings of Milton's epic poems.

Professor HARDIN CRAIG, of the University of Missouri, is a member of the Advisory Board of the Shakespeare Association. A prolific author and editor, he is most recently remembered as the editor of *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* and *An Introduction to Shakespeare* (8 plays and selected sonnets).

JOHN CROW, Esq., Lecturer at King's College, London, was a visitor in the United States in 1950, when he collected material for his edition of *Romeo and Juliet* in the new Arden series.

Dr. GILES E. DAWSON, Curator of Books and Manuscripts at the Folger Shakespeare Library, and an original member of the Editorial Board of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, is the author of many articles dealing with bibliographical and textual problems in Shakespeare, by-products of the monumental bibliography of editions of Shakespeare since 1700 which he has in preparation.

Mr. JOHN FLEMING, a Director and the Secretary-Treasurer of the Shakespeare Association of America, is Vice President of the Rosenbach Company.

Dr. C. BEECHER HOGAN, of Woodbridge, Connecticut, is compiling a record of the performances of Shakespeare's plays in England throughout the eighteenth century.

Professor SAMUEL FREDERICK JOHNSON, Assistant Professor at New York University, served until recently as Assistant Secretary of the Modern Language Association. His publications include articles on subjects from Beowulf to Robert Lowell.

JOHN LEON LIEVSAY is Professor of English at the University of Tennessee. He is the author of articles and reviews in various learned journals and of a text for college freshmen. In the summer of 1952 he will hold a Research Fellowship at the Newberry Library, Chicago.

J. M. NOSWORTHY, Esq., of the Faculty of University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, is the editor of *Cymbeline* for the New Arden series.

Dr. KRISTIAN SMIDT, of the University of Oslo, is at present visiting libraries and universities in the United States. His specialty is the development of the English language in the age of Shakespeare and its pronunciation.

Professor PHILIP WILLIAMS, of Duke University, is the author of textual and bibliographical articles relating to *Troilus and Cressida*.

JOHN MARTIN YOKLAVICH is Assistant Professor of English in the School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University. His chief work to date is a critical edition of George Peele's *Battle of Alcazar*.

Professor W. GORDON ZEEVELD, of the University of Maryland, is the author of *Foundations of Tudor Policy*.

